

*Reviewed: Prodigy 7X by B-52*

*Numark D<sup>2</sup> Director*

SOUND · LIGHTING · VIDEO · MUSIC · PERFORMING

# Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE 108 JULY 2007

[www.mobilebeat.com](http://www.mobilebeat.com)

## HOW'S YOUR RECEPTION?

*Tune Up Your Wedding Events  
Working with Other Vendors  
Wedding Music: Beyond Basics  
Learn from Expert MCs*

## WEDDINGS ALL OVER!

*A LOOK AT REGIONAL RECEPTION DIVERSITY*

## HOW TO

## HOST YOUR OWN BRIDAL SHOW

## DRESSING &

*FOR SUCCESS... YOU & YOUR GEAR*

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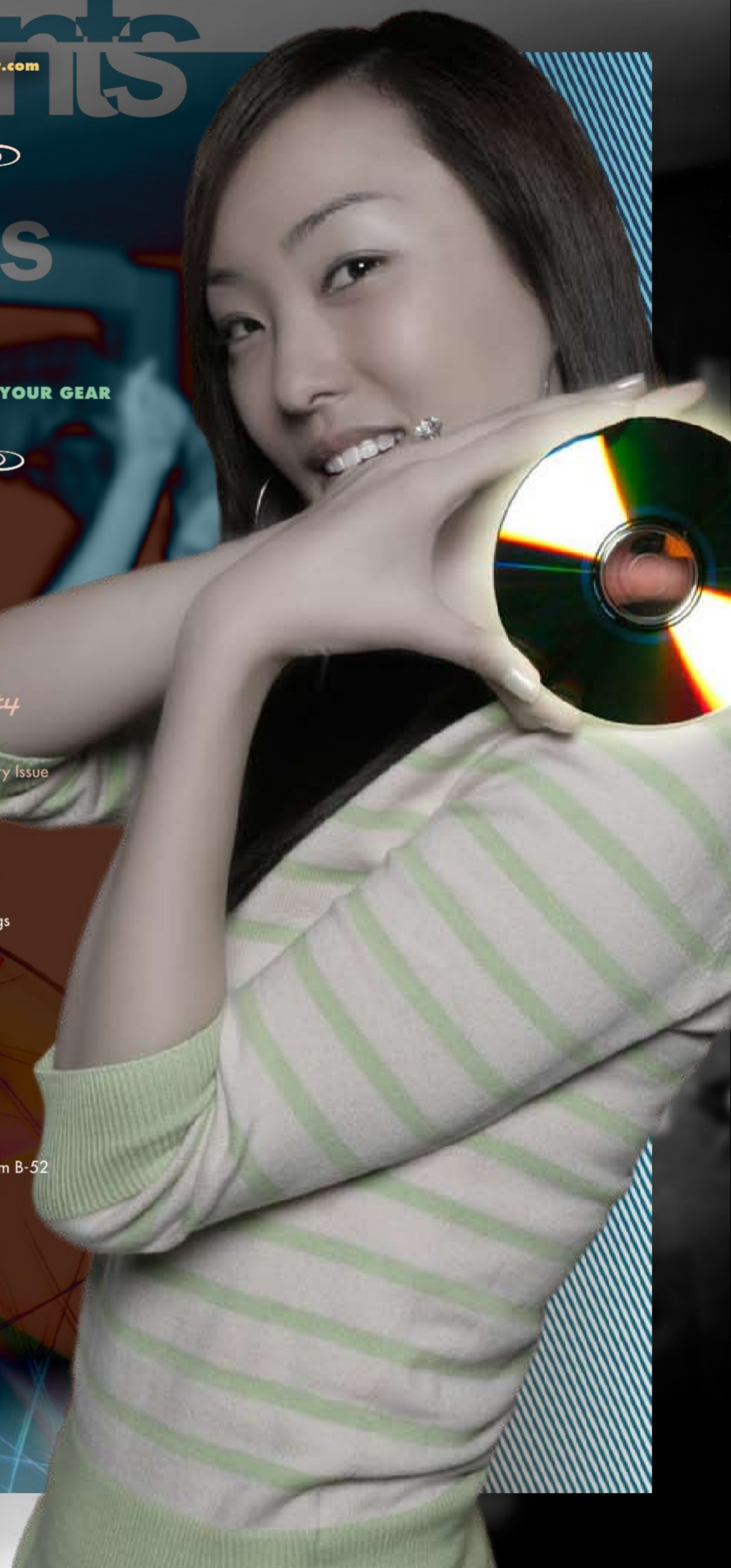
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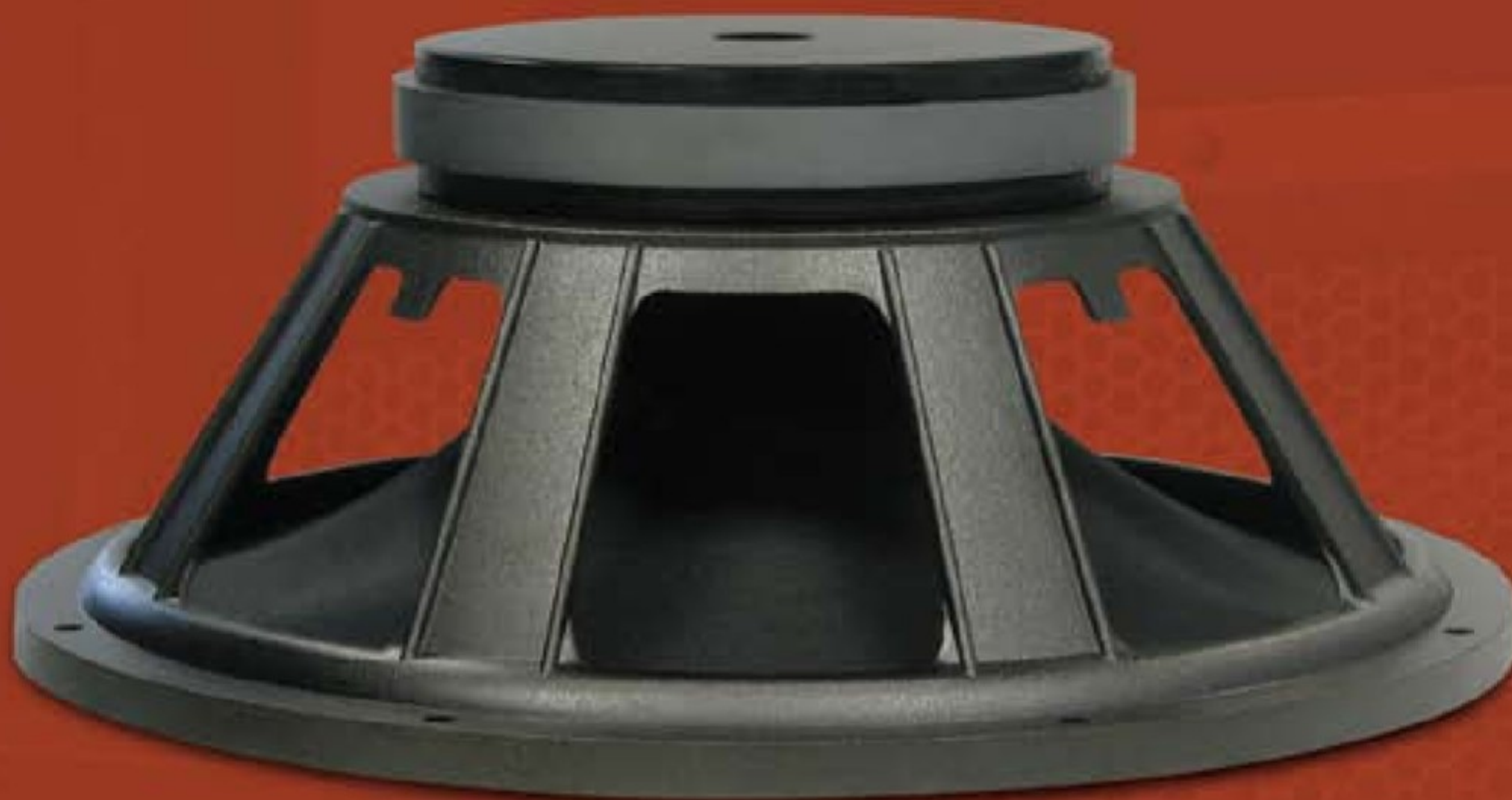
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*"The Inside Story" DVD explores Club V Series loudspeakers in detail. Order your free copy today at [www.yamaha.com/insidestory](http://www.yamaha.com/insidestory).*





**W**elcome to an in-depth look at wedding reception events. In this installment of *Mobile Beat* we are approaching this bread-and-butter area for many DJs from a variety of perspectives, which we hope will benefit reception novices and veterans alike. The first group should find a lot of info they can use to improve their wedding chops, while the second group may encounter some new ideas or be encouraged to reevaluate their current practices. Articles cover everything from wedding music (Jay Maxwell, Mark Johnson) to working with your fellow wedding vendors (Mike Ryan), even going so far as to show you how to host your own bridal fair (Paul Beardmore). Learn from the best as we talk to Peter Merry about his controversial new book on receptions. We even give you ideas for making the best visual impression possible at your receptions (Stu Chisholm). Also, you'll get a glimpse into the wedding worlds of other DJs from around the country as we survey the variety of traditions across the continent, courtesy of Jim Weisz.

Along with all the wedding-specific wisdom, we help you improve your basic performance, focusing on public speaking skills (with DJ Coach Paul Kida), while also helping you improve your ability to close the sale, even with the most challenging prospects, by using vivid imagery (Larry Williams).

# To the World of Weddings... and Beyond

We debut Steve Sharp's new take on new music. Mobile DJs have a foot in both the traditional and the transitional worlds of entertainment. We offer this fresh music column as an aid to entertainers who know the importance of being aware of what's coming their way, even if the job doesn't require always being ahead of the curve.

Speaking of the cutting edge, our two major gear reviews are well worth noting. B-52's ProdigyFX dual CD/mixer unit and Numark's D2 Director represent different approaches to the evolution of playback control. We take a close look at these two innovative units.

And don't forget: For the absolute latest on gear, music and anything that impacts the DJ world, surf over the [www.mobilebeat.com](http://www.mobilebeat.com) and [www.prodj.com](http://www.prodj.com). Get the instant scoop online—then turn to the pages of *Mobile Beat* for a deeper view of important DJ developments. ■

— Dan Walsh, Editor in Chief and Managing Editor

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**MOBILE BEAT**  
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# Valuable Information

**T**his issue of *Mobile Beat* is focusing squarely on wedding receptions, while future issues will cover various special topics.

(Next up, in issue 109, is a bunch of fresh info on youth events.) In the magazine, we have to fill the pages with content and then send it off to be printed, so it always has to reach a point of finality. What's great about the Forums at <http://start.prodj.com> is that the discussion can continue as long as there is an interest or a need. So, once you've digested the feast of reception information contained on these pages, you can go to the forums online and continue feeding your head.

Under the heading "Wedding Reception Time Lines" at the Formal Events forum Jokerswild posted a timeline and received a ton of constructive criticism. Everyone has a slightly different take on how things should be done. As

part of his reply, The Jam Master pointed out that "...it really always depends on what the bride and groom want, its their wedding..." Pointing to the topic of differences based on location (which Jim Weisz covers in this issue of *Mobile Beat* as well—see page 28), the venerable Cap observed, "...each area (region) in the US and Canada have completely different norms. There is no consistency except perhaps what needs to be done..." He also points to a past thread at the Disc Jockey America forums that ended up explaining the reasons behind each reception element, rather than exact timings. For the rest of this valuable discussion for any wedding DJ, head over to <http://start.prodj.com>.

In the same forum, SiliconDJ was having trouble coming up with a song for the Grand Entrance for an upcoming wedding reception ("Grand Entrance music suggestion?"). The variety of possibilities that came back was quite interesting—ranging from the Scorpions' "Rock You Like a Hurricane" to "It Had to Be You" as done by Harry Connick Jr. Forum participant RFrong responded with some great suggestions for creatively solving the problem: "All good suggestions above, but maybe you should

consider a different approach to find something more meaningful. What kind of music does the couple listen to? What are their hobbies? Are they sports fans? College alum? Favorite movies? TV shows? Is there anything in their Love Story that could trigger their choice? Is there ethnic pride at play here?" He went on to describe ending up with a Red Sox-associated song for one couple who were die-hard fans.

Over in the Music and Videos forum, a post requesting help in locating themed music for a wine tasting/ballroom dancing event came from Fusionsound. Since he had the event coming up right away, the many answers were definitely appreciated. This is a good example of the immediate help you can often get at the forums. This post saw many replies with song possibilities, along with suggestions for where to look for more.

And speaking of valuable information, ever wonder where old threads go after the shouting's done (so to speak)? Some crawl away to die, while others fade away. But the best of past discussions can be found in the Archive of Knowledge forum. Check it out today—you might still learn something new to you! ■



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## Hooking Up

Now it's easier than ever for mobile DJs to get set up quickly for a great performance. The **CK-1000 MP3** from **American Audio** combines a dual CD/MP3 player with a 2-channel mixer, in one affordable, easy-to-transport deck. Once at the gig, you can make a quick and easy connection to a pair of powered speakers using the XLR outputs in the rear of the unit. A digital output is also provided. The CK-1000 MP3 contains an arsenal of creative tools that can be used with both CD and MP3 tracks, such as digital scratching, a tap sync BPM counter, a tempo lock, and a Bop effect.

Advanced cueing with MP3 track searching by frame—as opposed to the more common by-the-second method—gives users the ability to pinpoint musical cues with a level of accuracy (72 frames per second) previously attainable only with high-end CD players. Other search features include Advanced Track Search and Folder Search, which lets you organize your tracks however you see fit. Both the track titles and artist names are prominently displayed whenever an MP3 disc is played, and a visual marker shows clear reference points so DJs can view exactly where in the song each track is currently playing. Essential CDP features like Q-Start, antishock (20 seconds per side) and a pitch control ( $\pm 4\%$ ,  $\pm 8\%$ , and  $\pm 16\%$ ) are also included.

As a 2-channel mixer, the CK-1000 MP3 is well-equipped too. It includes a variety of handy inputs: 2 CD (built-in), 2 Line, 1 Aux, and 1 Mic. An additional auxiliary input jack on the faceplate is great for hooking up portable MP3 players. It offers Bass, Mid, Treble, and Gain adjustment for each channel, as well as Master Level, Mic Level, Cue Pan, and Cue Level. For visual monitoring, Stream Flow LED indicators are provided on each channel. A convenient Flip/Flop On/Off button provides Relay Playback between the two CD players. [www.americaudio.us](http://www.americaudio.us)



## Moving Speakers

Bringing unprecedented performance value to DJs, musicians, and small-venue live sound applications, JBL Professional has introduced the new PRX500 Series powered loudspeakers. The PRX500 Series combines industry-leading JBL loudspeaker components with world-class amplification technology from Crown International to deliver lightweight, high-performance powered loudspeakers.

With patented lightweight JBL Differential Drive® transducers and engineered high-design

enclosures, the PRX500 Series is the lightest portable PA loudspeaker series in its class. Each loudspeaker is equipped with Crown Class D amplifiers with switch mode power supplies and a DSP-based input module, providing built-in power and flexibility. Each model includes mic and line level input capability, two selectable EQ contours, and level control.

The PRX500 Series consists of five models. The PRX512MP is a 12-inch, two-way, multi-purpose speaker system with 70 x 70-degree nominal coverage, and 400W low-frequency and 100W high-frequency amp channels. The PRX515P is a 15-inch, two-way, trapezoidal speaker system with 70 x 70-degree nominal coverage, and 400W low-frequency and 100W high-frequency amplifier channels. The

PRX535P is a 15-inch, three-way trapezoidal speaker system, with 90 x 50-degree nominal coverage, and 400W low-frequency, 150W mid-frequency, and 100W high-frequency amp channels. The PRX525P is a dual 15-inch, two-way, trapezoidal speaker system with 70 x 70-degree nominal coverage, and dual 275W low-frequency and 100W high-frequency amplifier channels. Rounding out the lineup, the PRX518S is an 18-inch subwoofer system with an integrated 500W amp. [www.jblpro.com](http://www.jblpro.com)

## A Bigger Blizzard

Like a silent winter night's storm, the new **Antari S-200** snow machine will create a blizzard of snow with a whisper of sound. An upscale version of the popular Antari S-100 II snow machine, the S-200 takes the outstanding features of its predecessor to the next level, offering double the snow output along with much quieter operation. Distributed in North America exclusively by **Elation Professional**, the Antari S-200 is ideal for applications such as stage productions and video/movie sets, where low noise levels are a priority. Its motor is mounted on rubber cushions inside the housing to reduce vibration noise, allowing the S-200 to operate at a hushed 63 decibels. Apart from its quiet operation, users of all types—including clubs and other "noisy"

entertainment venues—will appreciate the S-200's massive snow output of 140 ml per minute. Fully adjustable, it allows users to easily transform the output of flakes from a gentle snowfall to a white-out blizzard. Thanks to the included SC-2 remote control or built-in DMX functionality, this can be achieved without even touching the machine. The S-200's large 5-liter tank capacity helps the flurries last a long time.

[www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)





# PRODIGY<sup>FX</sup>

Professional Dual CD-MP3 Player / VCA Mixer with Accutrack™

*prod·i·gy [prod-i-jee]*

1. A person having extraordinary talent or ability: a musical prodigy.
2. Something wonderful or marvelous; a wonder.
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## Take dMIX With You

Seamlessly integrating the power of its patent-pending USB compatible technology with a mixer section and an iPod® Dock, **Cortex**, a part of GCI Technologies, has announced the retail release of its groundbreaking **dMIX-300 Digital Music Control Station**.

Sleekly designed and weighing only a mere 12 lbs, the dMIX-300 is a portable DJ media player that's ready for the digital DJ on the go. Integrating Cortex's patent pending USB compatible technology with a 2-channel audio mixer and a built-in iPod Dock (suitable for all iPod models), DJs can search, cue, play, pitch, mix and even scratch digital music files (MP3 or WAV) directly from their iPod or any other external USB storage device!

Fully CBR and VBR MP3 compatible, the unit boasts essential features such as: iTunes playlist compatibility; two Tri Mode Jog Wheels for search or pitch bend; two 80-character dot matrix playback info displays; a rear-mounted USB port



for storage device sharing and external CD/DVD-ROM drive option; individual RCA outputs for master, booth and record; and a USB keyboard connection offering faster search and navigation.

The mixer section comes fully equipped with a 3-band EQ per channel with gain control, blue "Fluid" diffused VU meters, cue fader, master/cue select for headphone output, 1/4" mic input with 2-band EQ, auxiliary inputs for phono or line devices, ultra-precise pitch control with a range of  $\pm 24\%$  and a 45mm SuperSmooth crossfader

with selectable crossader curve.

Easy to carry, easy to use, and at an MSRP of \$999 (street price approximately \$600), the dMIX-300 is a digital music control station that is perfect for permanent installations as well as mobile DJ rigs. [www.cortex-pro.com](http://www.cortex-pro.com)



## Maximum Return

Recently reintroduced by BBE Sound, the 362SW combines the company's BBE Sonic Maximizer signal processor and independent subwoofer control, with a variable 30-120Hz low-pass filter and output level control. Applications include music playback systems in studios, nightclubs, and theaters; mobile DJ systems, sound

reinforcement systems, and any bass, guitar, or keyboard rig. Other features are unbalanced 1/4" and RCA inputs and outputs, LED meter displays, and clip indicators. More features are a frequency response from 5Hz-30kHz, signal to noise ratio of 108dB in/120dB out, plus a 5 year warranty. [www.bbesound.com](http://www.bbesound.com)



## Gator Slides into Action

Gator has developed a new line of G-Tour CD player cases with two slide-out doors in front and rear, to allow use while in the case or to leave the players connected with the top of the case on. These plywood with PVC road cases feature the new bright red Penn Elcom recessed MOL twist latches, spring-loaded rubber-gripped handles, and heavyduty Penn Elcom zinc-plated hardware. Models come complete with EVA foam and carpet-padded interior, adhesive-backed foam blocking system, convoluted foam in the lid, and breakaway hinges. The G-Tour CD Series is available in 9"x12" (G-Tour-CD- (9x12) and 13"x17" (G-Tour-CD-13x17) sizes. [www.gatorcases.com](http://www.gatorcases.com)



## More Rack for Your Rig

SKB Corporation, a leader in protection and transport case innovations, has developed the new SKB-REX6 Expander Rack to augment the SKB19-R1406 Mighty Gig Rig that was introduced at the 2007 Winter NAMM. The new unit features a 6U extended-depth rack that can be locked securely to the new Mighty Gig Rig for a total of 12U on the front of the combined unit. The SKB-REX6 Expander Rack allows for top-to-bottom access interior cable routing up through the bottom of the SKB19-R1406 Mighty Gig Rig, making the unit the perfect solution for housing all of your electronics and sound gear and keeping it all connected, making the unit a studio on wheels. The new combo makes it easy to roll your setup easily to where you want it. The SKB19-R1406 and SKB-REX6 are covered by SKB's Million Mile Lifetime Guaranty. [www.skbcases.com](http://www.skbcases.com)





# Weddings on Wings



**MegaSeg**  
dj software

There's no reason to fear computer mixing ever again. MegaSeg is built from the ground up to work on the Mac platform; the best and easiest system around. Unlike most crash-prone Windows-based programs, you won't have to worry about the first dance.

Besides being the most stable DJ software available, MegaSeg is also the most flexible to use. Play music videos encoded from DVD or other sources, and mix music from your iTunes or iPod library, including the iTunes Music Store.

Streamline your system with MegaSeg, and make your next wedding gig a breeze!

**Get a free demo at  
MegaSeg.com**



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## Mega Feature Count 4 MegaSeg Update

The new 4.0.2 update is now available for users of Fidelity Media's MegaSeg 4 DJ and radio automation software. It adds over 40 improvements and fixes throughout the application, including compatibility with Apple's Mac OS X 10.4.9 update, a fix for DAC-3 support on PowerPC-based Macs, an average track time display in the Scheduler, more iTunes importing options, ID3 tag reading fixes, a resizable Edit Categories dialog, faster sorting speed, and other optimizations.

MegaSeg 4.0 brought Universal Binary support to the program, as well as DAC-3 controller support, tighter iTunes and Spotlight search integration, network library syncing, a robust set of color coding options, hierarchical folder tree navigation, Ambient Video Playlists for continuous video output, enhanced track looping, and pitch-lock mixing, among 100 other improvements.

The update is free for all MegaSeg 4.0 users, who will be notified automatically via email. Owners of older versions can upgrade for \$79. MegaSeg supports all Apple Mac G3, G4, G5, and Intel systems running Mac OS X 10.2 or higher, with a 600 MHz or faster processor, and a minimum of 512 MB of RAM. [www.megaseg.com](http://www.megaseg.com)

## Ots Modules Add Features

Ots Corporation has released OtsDJ Pro 1.75 with Video and Karaoke modules. OtsDJ is a Windows-based music/audio/video playback and management program now with automated beat mixing, extraordinary time-scaling, broadcast-quality video, and a reliably smooth ticker.

OtsDJ Pro 1.75 can produce quality, accurate, professional automated beat mixing (ABM), or you can turn off ABM to create completely manual mixes. Just set the match-points, transition lengths, and non-percussive intensity values once, and ABM will then mix into any other beat-tracked song professionally and smoothly. This technology will automatically and effectively beat mix virtually unlimited song combinations, creating a fully automated system perfect for broadcasting or background music. It also frees up the interactive entertainers to leave the console and work the crowd. Supporting the ABM function is automated beats-per-minute detection and the ability to time-scale video, audio or CD+G right down to stationary and up to double-speed.

The new OtsDJ Video module produces smooth, full-motion video output. Among the features of OtsDJ's new Video (and Karaoke) module is the ability to correctly display aspect ratios, preventing disproportionate stretching or shrinking. To further enhance the visual appeal of non-widescreen videos, OtsDJ provides an embellishment option, which replaces the black-bar areas to fill the screen while maintaining the correct source video aspect ratio. In the absence of video content or when play is stopped, the slideshow mode dissolves between multiple JPEGs. With 20 truly smooth video mix transitions, smooth scrolling ticker, "music video TV show" style animated titling, and JPEG slideshow, OtsDJ Video creates a professional live production.

You can combine the Video and Karaoke modules to play video and karaoke content on the same system. The smoother ticker adds the ability to announce the next singer or make general announcements while CD+G based Ots files play. The ticker will continue to work through breaks and when



normal audio is playing, during which a JPEG image or two alternating JPEGs can be displayed. Mix CD+G tracks with IntelliFade mixing or even auto beat mix if desired.

A fully functioning 30-day demo is available for download at:

[www.otsdj.com/download/otsdjdemo.html](http://www.otsdj.com/download/otsdjdemo.html)

## New Vistas and Video Ed

M-Audio, a leading provider of creative tools for computer-centric musicians, has announced the release of Microsoft Vista drivers for many of the company's most popular products. M-Audio currently expects to release 32-bit Vista drivers for all of the following models during the second quarter of 2007:

all FireWire products; all currently selling USB MIDI keyboards; Fast Track USB, Fast Track Pro, JamLab, MobilePre USB, Black Box and Transit® USB interfaces; Conectiv and Xponent DJ interfaces; and the Revolution 5.1 PCI card.

"Vista represents both an opportunity and challenge for music hardware and software manufacturers," says Adam Castillo, marketing director at M-Audio. "While pursuing an aggressive schedule, we wanted take the time to work through all the details and testing necessary in delivering drivers that are up to M-Audio standards. We're confident of the results and proud to release Vista drivers that will enable our customers to migrate to this powerful platform."





Visit the Drivers page of [www.m-audio.com](http://www.m-audio.com) for a list of Vista drivers that have been released to date.

Especially for DJs, M-Audio has unveiled 31 free video tutorials designed to help users master every aspect of the company's powerful and popular Torq DJ software. They can be viewed at <http://www.m-audio.com/university> or <http://www.torq-dj.com>.

The Torq Tutorial video series encompasses a diverse array of topics to support users of all levels. The first videos explain Torq Conectiv and Torq Xponent setup, the Torq Browser, Auto BPM mapping, QuickCue points, looping, built-in effects, MIDI mapping, VST FX, speed and key adjustment, and Snapshots. Later videos explore the Sampler, synchronization, recording the Master Output, External Control, AMPutate mode, using the Line Input, Pitch/Key Lock with External Control, the Mixer, cueing assignment, microphone recording, and QWERTY keyboard functions.

"M-Audio is as committed to educating customers as we are to developing cutting-edge products," says Castillo. "These videos will help new users to understand the capabilities of Torq before purchasing, and will help existing users to go even deeper with new tips and tricks." [www.m-audio.com](http://www.m-audio.com)

### Rugged Storage in a Flash

Of note to DJs utilizing plug-and-play controller systems like the Cortex HDC line and Numark's D2, Corsair, a worldwide leader in high performance computer and flash memory products, has unveiled an extremely rugged line of USB 2.0 flash drives: Flash Survivor. Designed and engineered to be the

industry's toughest USB drive, Flash Survivor is water resistant (to 650 feet/20 atmospheres), CNC-milled aluminum-encased, and shock proof, promising to safely store a user's information and files in the most demanding environments. Flash Survivor is immediately available in two variations: Flash Survivor GT 8GB and Flash Survivor 4GB.

Features include an EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer) waterproof seal and triple-point shock protection. CNC (Computer Numerical Control) milled aluminum (as found in aircraft part production) ensures consistency in material quality, thereby guaranteeing the USB drive's toughness. Additional protection from shock and vibration is achieved through the use of rubber molded collar shielding. When dropped, the durable rubber absorbs the impact force to prevent damage to the inner drive and the USB connector. Engineered outer metal tube with two end caps provides enforcement to the hollow tube and prevents it from collapsing when abused.

Not just accepting "flash" as generic moniker, Corsair claims that the GT version is five times faster than other drives, with sustained read/write performance of up to 34MB/sec. The units are engineered with highly screened NAND flash and an advanced memory controller, utilizing enhanced dual channel and interleave memory technologies for greater speed.

The units are preloaded with a security application featuring 256bit AES encryption, the most secure encryption algorithms available. [www.corsair.com](http://www.corsair.com)

# Feed Your Head

## The PCDJ UDJ-1 Headphone System gives you a direct computer connection

By Brett Agard

**A** good number of DJs I know have made the switch from CD DJing to computer-based or hardware-based digital DJing, including myself. For the better part of four years, I have lugged a nearly 70 lb. rack-mounted computer system with a mixer, a PCDJ DAC controller, and mixer built into the rack. Lately, I have been looking at going smaller, and using my new laptop for my smaller events. The one major issue I was having was that with my laptop, I could not cue songs through my mixer because of there being only one output on my laptop.

Digital 1 DJ/PCDJ ([www.pcdj.com](http://www.pcdj.com)) has helped to solve that dilemma for me by coming out with the UDJ-1 Digital DJ Kit, featuring UDJ-1 Headphones. The unique thing about this

particular headphone is that it does not use an 1/8 inch jack to plug into your computer unit. Instead, it is equipped with a USB connection for your system, and when plugged in, loads and creates its very own built in sound card. Your laptop or rack-mounted PC will detect it as a separate sound card. Once installed, you can go into your digital DJing software and set it up as your cue output. This setup is especially suited to my smaller laptop system, eliminating the need to add another external, expensive sound card.

The headphones have large padded listening areas with an adjustable height mechanism for a better fit on your ears. The ear pieces easily rotate so you can also hold a single earpiece up to your ear, as well as wearing them completely over the head.

The unit also come with PCDJ's Blue VRM Software. This is their beginning digital DJing software, and does not have the bells and whistles that other versions have, but will be more than good enough to get a beginning digital DJ going.

If you are looking for a quick and easy way to transform a laptop or other computer into a cue-capable DJ machine, the UDJ-1 Digital DJ Kit is a good solution.



### SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

- INTEL OR AMD 1 GHZ PROCESSOR OR ABOVE - PENTIUM M INTEL CENTRINO MOBILE TECHNOLOGY 1.6 GHZ (LAPTOP)
- CELERON OR DURON PROCESSOR ARE NOT RECOMMENDED
- VIDEOCARD 64 MB 1024X768 RESOLUTION (DUAL VIDEO OUTPUTS FOR KJ SUPPORT)
- WINDOWS 2000 OR XP
- DIRECTX 9 OR ABOVE
- WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER 9
- 512MB RAM (MEMORY)
- 130MB OF FREE HARD DRIVE FOR PROGRAM INSTALL
- 1 AVAILABLE USB PORT

### UDJ-1 HEADPHONES:

- DRIVER UNIT: 50MM
- SPEAKER IMPEDANCE: 64Ω ±15%
- SPEAKER SENSITIVITY: 110DB ±3DB
- SPEAKER FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 20HZ-20KHZ
- MAXIMUM POWER INPUT: 80MW
- CORD LENGTH: 2.2 METERS

[www.pcdj.com](http://www.pcdj.com)  
MSRP: \$99.99



# Direct Connection

## DJ Intelligence ads instant lead generation from online DJ directories

**DJ Intelligence, the industry's leading solution for interactive website tools, has joined forces with the industry's leading online DJ directories DiscJockeys.com, Planning.ProDJ.com, and MyPartyPlanner.com to create a powerful new lead generation system for mobile DJs who are interested in booking more events, more quickly and less expensively than traditional methods.**

One of the most widely used website tools offered by DJ Intelligence is the Availability Checker, which allows DJs to put a date calendar selector on their website so prospective clients can check their availability and request additional information. One of the most popular features of this tool has always been the ability to send these inquiries instantly to the DJ's cell phone, PDA, or wireless device. The DJ receives the inquiry literally within seconds of the prospective client's submitting the information on their website, a powerful advantage for both part time and full time DJs in today's highly competitive market.

Through this new exclusive partnership DJs are now able to integrate their DJ Intelligence Availability Checker into their enhanced listings on the industry's leading online DJ directories, DiscJockeys.com, Planning.ProDJ.com, and MyPartyPlanner.com. The powerful result is that

when prospective clients locate a DJ through any one of these directories, their information can be sent instantly to the DJ's cell phone, PDA, or wireless device, in addition to their e-mail.

"The up and coming generation of brides and party planners do not like to wait," says Andrew Starr, president of the directories.

"Through this new integration they will be able to connect with qualified DJs instantly. It's great for the prospective client, and great for the DJ. Everybody wins."

The integration is quick and simple to set up, and the only requirements are that the DJ be a subscriber to DJ Intelligence and have an enhanced listing on any of the above directories.

"It's amazing to think that in less than a minute's time a prospective client could locate one of these directories through a search engine, perform a search for a local DJ in their area, click a button to check the DJ's availability, and receive a personal call from the DJ to answer any questions they may have," says Scott Kartsounes, CEO of Intelligence, Inc., DJ Intelligence's parent company. "As a veteran mobile DJ myself, I know from experience that many times the first DJ to speak with the prospective client is the DJ that books the event. I can't think of a more powerful competitive advantage than receiving inquiries instantly on your cell phone. You can be speaking with a prospective client literally seconds after they find your listing or land on your website."

DJ Intelligence, a service of Intelligence, Inc., was launched in 2002 and gives DJs the ability to

add interactive tools to their existing DJ website. Over a dozen dynamic tools are included with the subscription service, including an availability checker, online music search and request system, event planning forms, event timelines, satisfaction surveys, price quote generator, online booking system, contact inquiry form, secure web-based payments, automated client referrals, client login, guest requests, and more. All tools are customized to match the look and feel of the DJ's website and can integrate into any existing site, regardless of who designed it or where it is hosted, and with no programming required. DJ Intelligence is used by thousands of professional DJ companies in over a dozen countries worldwide. For more information, contact Intelligence, Inc. at [info@intelligenceinc.com](mailto:info@intelligenceinc.com) or visit [www.djintelligence.com](http://www.djintelligence.com).

DiscJockeys.com, Planning.ProDJ.com, and MyPartyPlanner.com are the industry's leading online DJ directories, used by thousands of brides and party planners every day to locate DJ entertainment for their special events. All three directories are optimized with the major search engines and promoted heavily within the weddings and special events industries. Basic listings on each site are free, with affordable cost options for upgrading to an enhanced listing (which puts your company at the top of the results with full contact information plus allows you to integrate your DJ Intelligence Availability Checker). ■







DJ Wes Mobile DJ Service  
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The Party Company  
Racine, WI

Complete Music  
Rapid City, SD

# PT Cruisin' to Performances

By Anthony B. Barthel

**D**Js come in as many sizes, shapes, and skill levels as the performances they offer so at Mobile Beat, we've developed a test load of gear and are planning to put a lot of vehicles through their paces while examining them as gearmobiles. One of the stables of DJ vehicles is the PT Cruiser and we recently put one through its paces.

If you do a lot of concerts or proms you might not find the PT Cruiser unable to fulfill your transport requirements, but if weddings are your thing it's possible that a PT Cruiser is a good choice. The rear seats of the venerable PT Cruiser can fold down, or be removed completely like a minivan. The front passenger seat can be folded down flat to hold a bit more gear.

I thought I'd jam as much gear as possible into the little PT just to see what would fit. I was able to put a DJ console (4RU front, 6RU slant top) on the front passenger seat, four JBL EONS stacked behind the front seats, and even my four American DJ Pocket Scans in their case behind this. Finally, my MultiCart sat on its back in the very back.

Atop the EONS, which sit nicely side to side, I put a Tupperware box with various cables, connectors, and such.

With the Cruiser so full of gear, I wouldn't want to have to come to a sudden stop. You share your passenger space with a lot of relatively weighty gear that can put a serious dent in your thinking cap if it starts flying around the interior with any speed. Plus, with the rack full of gear on the passenger seat's folded back I had trouble seeing out the right side of the car and I couldn't see the mirror at all on the passenger side.

You might do better with fewer speakers or maybe a smaller rack of gear. In this case, you would have a good cargo hauler; however, with fewer speakers you wouldn't have any backup gear. That always scares me personally.

Compared to much larger vehicles, the PT Cruiser is relatively efficient with a 2.4 liter four-cylinder engine that can be mated to a five-speed manual transmission or a four-speed automatic. While you're not going to want to go out drag racing with the car, it certainly does the job of hustling around town. If you want more power, and who doesn't, there is a turbocharger available that makes 180 horsepower and 210 lb-ft. of torque, compared to the 150 horsepower and 165 lb-ft of torque. If you wanna go nuts, within limits, there's a GT version of the PT

Cruiser that has 230 horsepower and 245 lb-ft. of torque.

For smaller functions the PT Cruiser is a popular choice. One of the nice things about the PT Cruiser is that it's popular and still has appeal to various enthusiast groups around the country, so you can personalize the car like crazy. The PT Cruiser is a nice choice for smaller performances, or maybe as a primary source of transportation for people and stuff in addition to your huge Sprinter. 🚗

## Track the Facts

Vehicle and Manufacturer  
**Chrysler PT Cruiser**

MSRP  
**\$15,405 / \$24,765**

Gear Hauling  
**Wedding System**

MPG / Range  
**15mpg / 425-mile range**



By Mike Ficher

**F**or about one and a half years, I co-hosted a sports talk show, featuring a mix of observations, conversations and skits, on a local community radio station in Bend, Oregon, a rich outdoor paradise with a disproportionate mix of high level athletes. Since Mt. Bachelor is only about twenty minutes west of Bend, many ex-Olympians in winter sports flock to Central Oregon, not only for access to world class skiing, snowboarding, and cross country skiing but crisp winters and pleasant summers.

On one memorable show, Priscilla Welch shared her story about running in the first women's marathon at the 1984 summer Olympics in Los Angeles, California. Representing England, her country of birth, the unofficial women's world record holder in the master's division for the marathon—her 1987 standard of 2:26:51 still stands today—recalled watching the grueling races on a black-and-white television.

"When I was a child, I'd see the guys coming down the tunnel onto the track to finish their marathon. You didn't have the roving camera going out, following them around. I remember saying, 'Wonder what it feels like coming down that tunnel?'"

"Well, here I am at the '84 Olympic Games approaching the tunnel going, 'Wow'—I'm in sixth position—and I'm running down the tunnel thinking, 'This is the tunnel that I was looking at years ago!'"



# Chubby Checker

## A True Crowdpleaser

**Mobile Beat's first Lifetime Achievement Award winner reminisces and speaks his mind on musical labeling**

### In the Tunnel

And, there I was, in the service hall behind a stage area at the South Coast casino in Las Vegas, the site of the 2007 Mobile Beat convention, digital recorder in hand, peering through a door and a small opening in the rear stage curtain...waiting.

On stage, Chubby Checker, 65 years young, was replicating the energy and excitement that have mesmerized fans and littered floors with vigorous dancers for the past four and a half decades. Through the darkened narrow opening provided by the curtain, a maze of swirling lights were visible, accenting the decibel-straining, still-catchy

sounds of Chubby's biggest hit, "The Twist," propelling the teeming roomful of DJs, young and old, into a veritable mass of born-again teenagers on *American Bandstand*.

Chubby had the whole room, as the South Carolina-born, Philadelphia-bred entertainer has done so often in all his years in show business, in the hips of his twist.

### Oldies? OLDIES??

Chubby finished his set to tumultuous applause, retreated to the service hall behind the stage, and our contingent hastened away from the stage. We made our way to an



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adjoining room to the left of the main ballroom at the Las Vegas casino. A couple of DJs and workers at the South Coast greeted Chubby on his way to the room. Always gracious, the man born Ernest Evans signed autographs and posed for photographs. Once in the room, Chubby towed off and found his way to an inviting spread of vegetables, fruit, finger food, and beverages. He turned to me. "What is your show called?"

"The Ultimate Oldies Show," I replied.

"So we're doing songs from 1955 to 1970. OK."

Uh, oh...

"There's an ugly stigma to be called 'oldies' because, understand, to be on an oldies show... those songs are priceless, they're golden hits. So what you've done, you've just put a black flag over those great songs."

"How do call *The Twist*, the only song to be number 1 twice since God put man on the planet, an oldie? How do you do that?" Chubby asked incredulously.

Despite my smiling observations that oldies were a term of endearment, a crisp, succinct umbrella for a specific group of songs, Chubby was not be deterred.

"Well, when you wave the flag, you call it 'Old Glory'. But, you put something wonderful behind it, 'Old GLORY'. But, when you say oldies, it's like something you threw in the basement."

Now, mind you, literally dozens of radio station across the country embrace the slogan "good times and great oldies" to quickly identify their playlist for their audience. And, yes, the Ultimate Oldies Show celebrates the songs from the '50s, '60s and early '70s as timepieces worthy of respect and airtime. But, oldies radio formats rarely include or play Chubby's songs. Mobile entertainers still do—usually to popular response—but, radio has, for the most part, abandoned Chubby and many of his brethren from that era. It's an understandable source of Chubby's frustration with the label "oldies."

### I Just Had to Do That

Once beyond the opening salvo, Chubby recalled how he was inspired to pursue show business as a career.

"When I was four, I saw Ernest Tubb at the paper mill fair in Georgetown, South Carolina," Chubby recounted, "The whole place stinks of paper mill; I couldn't stay there. My mom took me away."

"Then I saw another singer, a child star called Sugar Child Robinson and he was playing his boogie woogie piano with three of his band members. I lost my mind. I just had to do that."

So what did Chubby do with his new-found career ambition to be a singer?

"From the time I was five years old 'til I was 17 years old, I was telling everybody, I'm going to be a big star, be on the radio. Everybody knew me like that. I was bragging about this all my life. 'What are you gonna do, Ernest, when you grown up?' 'I'm gonna be on television, I'm gonna be a big star. I'm gonna be on stage, I'm gonna have my band, I'm gonna be singing, I'm going to have a lot of people.'"

When he was seven, Chubby's family moved from South Carolina to Philadelphia. And, the young aspiring star kept talking—with some interesting results.



"I continued to follow that. And, I got in a lot of trouble with the bullies in the neighborhood for telling people I was going to be a big star. They used to beat me up."

So, Chubby sought sanctuary: "I took refuge amongst the Jewish people. I thought by the time I was thirteen I was going to get bar mitzvahed! I worked in the garment district to keep away from the gangs."

"Then, I went to Ninth Street after I got out of grade school and then I became an Italian because I started working in the Italian market."

And, that is where Ernest acquired a nickname.

"Tony Anastasi gave me the name, Chubby."

You can call him Chubby, you can call him the king of the Twist, you can call him king of the fad dances, you can now call him the first member of the Mobile Beat Hall of Fame. Just don't call his songs "oldies." ■

*A mobile DJ, dance instructor, MC, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express mobile entertainment, based in Bend, Oregon. A four-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of the mobile entertainer since 1986.*



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# Feelin' Satisfied



By Jay Maxwell

## Extras can make the difference, at the wedding and beyond

**M**y wife and I celebrated our sixteenth wedding anniversary recently. We dressed up, (meaning I wasn't wearing jeans) and headed downtown on a date without the kids to a restaurant that we had never eaten at before. For several years we had passed by Hyman's Seafood Restaurant in the heart of historic Charleston and at long last we were going to enjoy a night at one of the best-known eateries in the city. Billboards all along the interstate boasted that it had been voted the number one seafood restaurant in the Southeast by *Southern Living* magazine for eight years in a row. Regardless of the weather, there was always a long line outside the place, which gave the impression that there was a lengthy wait for some mouth-watering food.

This particular Friday night was no different when we arrived. As we walked across the street to approach the door we saw at least two dozen people waiting

outside and I assumed many more were waiting inside. Our first inclination was to just keep walking, but instead we stopped to ask how long was the wait (I assumed between one and a half and two hours). When the hostess wrote our name down and said the wait would be no longer than twenty minutes, I thought my ears had missed her saying "an hour" before the "twenty minutes," so I asked her to repeat herself—only to hear the same response of only twenty minutes at most.

During our short wait, I began to get a feeling about why this place was so popular even before we stepped inside. The front was made entirely of windows, so you could see everyone inside having a great time enjoying their shrimp, flounder, or the catch of the day. The kitchen was also clearly visible and your view of the grill and stove and the expert cooks frying up Southern specialties made you forget that public drooling is considered bad manners. While we were standing on the sidewalk, a waitress came by twice to offer everyone some hot-off-the-frying pan hushpuppies. Not to seem unappreciative, I helped myself each time to a few, not believing that I was getting food prior to officially entering a place that Harvard Business School had once used as a case study on how to run a successful service-oriented business. In less than the quoted twenty minutes, I heard those delightful words from our hostess, "Jay Maxwell, party of two." Even before my wife and I were seated at our table, the service and atmosphere that we had already experienced was superior to any that I had ever witnessed and I knew that I would be telling my friends about this night for a long time to come.

### SEATING OF THE MOTHERS AND BRIDESMAIDS

1. ....Canon in D (Pachelbel)
2. ....Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach)
3. ....Air on the "G" String (Bach)
4. ....Sheep May Safely Graze (Bach)
5. ....Ave Maria (Schubert)

### PROCESSIONAL

1. ....Bridal Chorus (Wagner)
2. ....Trumpet Voluntary (Purcell)
3. ....Spring "Four Seasons" (Vivaldi)
4. ....Trumpet Tune (Purcell)
5. ....Trumpet Voluntary – Prince of Denmark (Clarke)

### RECESSIONAL

1. ....Wedding March (Mendelssohn)
2. ....Hornpipe – Water Music (Handel)
3. ....Ode to Joy (Beethoven)
4. ....Rondeau (Mouret)
5. ....Hallelujah Chorus (Handel)

### INTRODUCTIONS OF WEDDING PARTY AT RECEPTION

1. ....Discovery – John Tesh
2. ....Celebration (Spirit of Olympia) – David Arkenstone
3. ....Chicago Song – David Sanborn
4. ....Zero to Sixty in Five – Pablo Cruise
5. ...."The couple's college fight song"

### WEDDING CAKE

1. ....St. Elmo's Fire – David Foster
2. ....The Wedding Song – Kenny G
3. ....How Sweet It Is – James Taylor or Marvin Gaye
4. ....Going to the Chapel – Dixie Cups
5. ....Ice Cream – Sarah McLachlan

### BOUQUET TOSS

1. ....Girls Just Want To Have Fun – Cyndi Lauper
2. ....It's Raining Men – Weather Girls
3. ....Wishin' and Hopin' – Best Friend's Wedding
4. ....I Feel Lucky – Mary C Carpenter
5. ....Ladies Night – Kool & Gang

### GARTER TOSS

1. ....Let's Get It On – Marvin Gaye
2. ....Legs – ZZ Top
3. ....Keep Your Hands to Yourself – Georgia Satellites
4. ....You Sexy Thing – Hot Chocolate
5. ....Hot In Herre – Nelly



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## Hear the Power of Technology



I wondered if the actual service and food would live up to the prelude we had received and all the local advertising hype. Checking out the menu, one thing that I didn't expect was the prices. The prices were incredibly reasonable. At first I thought they had given me a menu from the 1980s. The portions of food were also not what we expected: side dishes served in bowls instead of cups and my main course of flounder hanging off the side of an extra-large plate. Everything was better than we had expected, and we even told the manager when he paid a personal visit to our table—of course he paid a visit to every table. We briefly mentioned that we were celebrating our anniversary and then he immediately told our waiter that whatever dessert we wanted was on him. With their high-quality service, excellent food, and all the little extras that they add, it is no accident that they are known as one of the premier seafood establishments in the area.

#### At Your Service

It was the perfect spring evening after we left Hyman's, so we decided to take a stroll down the streets of our fair city. We were waiting to cross the street corner when a car pulled up and rolled down its passenger side window. This made me cautious as to what might happen next, but my fears were eased when a sweet voice from the driver excitedly said, "Hi, Jay. Happy anniversary! It is tonight, isn't it?" After giving her a brief reply, she sensed that I

I CAME TO THE REALIZATION THAT THE SERVICE WE OFFER OUR CLIENTS BEFORE THE EVENT WAS SIMILAR TO THE SERVICE WE HAD JUST HAD AT THE RESTAURANT.


had no idea who she was, so she quickly stated her name and that I was DJing her wedding tomorrow. As I got closer to her car she was thrilled to introduce me as "her DJ" to her bridesmaids that were in the car with her. They had just finished their rehearsal dinner and were driving back to the hotel. Even as they were driving away, I could still hear her tell her girlfriends what a great time they were going to have tomorrow night because, "Jay was going to be her DJ."

Though I was enjoying my date with my wife, my thoughts turned to how this bride recognized me on a rather dark corner, how she remembered my anniversary, and why she took the time to introduce me to everyone in the car. Also, in her mind there was no doubt the service that I was going to give her at her reception was going to result in a wonderful experience and a party to remember. I came to the realization that the service we offer our clients before the event was similar to the service we had just had at the restaurant. We strive to impress them from the start so they will remember us even before we announce their arrival at the reception. Often on website blogs, we have found our future brides recommending our company months before their actual date based on the quality of service they have already

received. It is often the extras that will set apart an extraordinary company from its competition...and many times these extras happen before the wedding date. Our personable phone interview, the warm handshake and smile at a bridal fair, and the down-home environment we create during the face-to-face consultations are just some of the extras we offer.

#### Musical Augmentation

The extras also happen at the event. The main focus for a DJ is usually the dance music for the evening, but many extras make the event special. The music for the introductions, the selections to play for the cake cutting and the songs for the bouquet and garter are all an essential part of any reception. We are asked more than ever to play for the wedding ceremony itself, so knowing what to play for the seating of the mothers, the processional, and recessional are vitally important to any DJ who wants to be known in the wedding market as a true professional. Songs in this issue's list consists of several categories of "extras" that should be contained in the wedding disc jockey's library. After all, it's always good to be prepared even when someone isn't requesting you to "play something we can dance to!" ■





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# Wedding Standards and Standard Weddings

By Mark Johnson

**Somehow, the same songs keep bringing joy to reception dancefloors**

**I recently performed for a wedding that would certainly qualify as one of the least stressful weddings ever. It went off without incident or complaint and it was certainly a pleasant surprise to miss out on the myriad of possible problems that could have arisen.**

The groom was pretty laid back, booking my services within two months of the actual wedding. Usually such short-notice weddings involve the brides being pregnant but that wasn't the case. They had just forgotten to book a DJ when they were taking care all of the other reception items.

The bride was Chinese and her parents and other family members were flying in from China for her PhD in electrical engineering graduation ceremony in May and staying until the wedding. The groom was also a PhD in EE as well. Perhaps this inspired their nonchalant attitude.

## Reception Mystery

They had returned my DJ agreement and deposit in a timely manner but, during the weeks preceding the date, they were very elusive, leaving me with many unanswered phone calls and un-replied-to emails. I left plenty of messages and didn't get any non-deliverable messages via e-mail.

Apparently neither the bride or groom had ever attended a wedding before and her parents were pretty clueless on the activities that occur during a typical "American" wedding. The civil ceremony, cocktail hour, and reception were all being held at the same Holiday Inn location. Logistically it was pretty easy, as I could set up one speaker for the outside gazebo ceremony, another speaker in the cocktail room, and my main system no more than 20 feet away in the reception room.

The hotel manager had pretty much planned their entire evening. 5:30 to 6:00 for

the ceremony, 6:00 to 7:00 for the cocktail hour, and 7:00 to 11:00 for the dinner and reception. I had gleaned these tidbits by contacting the hotel directly and asking the right questions, since I could not contact the bride or groom.

When I asked about the elements of the reception, i.e., introductions, cake cutting, garter, bouquet etc., she mentioned that she usually leaves it up to the DJ, as long as it doesn't interfere with the delivery of food. These particular elements went without any problems, as I basically facilitated each with the bride and groom being positioned in the right place at the right time. Thank goodness I carry spare garters—they didn't have one.

## Instant Music

Musically, they didn't even have a first dance song chosen or any songs chosen for any parent's dances. Thus, relying on my copy of the Mobile Beat Top 200 list, I picked those first three songs. It was at that point that I wondered if I could perform for a complete wedding using songs only from that list.

After the introductions and first dances, I weaved in and out of the slow and fast portions of the reception using exclusively the songs on the Top 200 list. Sure enough, with each passing song and the joy it generated, it further illustrated the absolute value of the songs on that list.

Toward the end of the reception, realizing that I had kept true to my little Top 200 plan, it really struck me how the general public still has a great fascination for these time-honored songs. This bride's nonexistent playlist was in sharp contrast to the kinds of playlists that I've received for other weddings.

## "Tried and True" vs. "Variety Is the Spice of Life"

Without being specific, I've had one wedding dominated by Grateful Dead music and another by Contemporary Christian music. I also recall receptions wanting a high amount of classical music played throughout. Having advance notice of these song requirements helped deliver the music that they desired.

Sometimes I get an exact song list to be played during the dinner and dancing portion of the reception. I try to advise the bride that while I can usually weave in certain songs throughout the reception, to rigidly adhere to a list removes the possibility of adjusting to the guest's reactions to the songs being played. Most of the time the brides

are pretty open to my professional opinion regarding the playing of songs. My intent is to work within the style of songs presented by the bride. After all, it's their party.

I've heard often about how mobile DJs sometimes disdain the use of these lists in an attempt to become more creative. It appears that those DJs perform for many weddings and, to be "different," they play different versions or remixes of the standards. Or they avoid the obvious standards altogether. Perhaps it's entertaining to them, providing a break from monotony—but what about the guests?

To the guests, the fact that you played "Mony, Mony" yesterday or last week has no bearing on today's reception. "Mony, Mony," "Love Shack," "YMCA," "The Electric Slide," and many other "obvious" standards caused my "unlisted" reception's dance floor to fill every time. The Mobile Beat Top 200 list certainly represents the best of the best. Not that I would bring 10 CDs containing only these songs. But a good ole' standard wedding can be a huge success with only these wedding standards.



Mark Johnson is a long-time mobile DJ and has written for Mobile Beat for years, giving his insightful and often incisive perspective on many business and operational ideas. His articles grow out of his own experience and his observations of other DJs during his travels. Always providing an alternative view, his previous articles can be found at [www.mobilebeat.com/archives](http://www.mobilebeat.com/archives).

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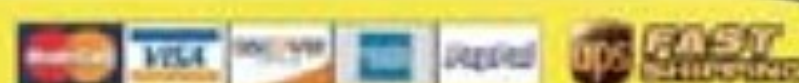
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# WEDDINGS

## A SURVEY OF THE RECEPTION LAND

By Jim Weisz

**I**t's Saturday night and you're getting ready to go through the routine you follow for just about every wedding you DJ. Have you ever wondered what another DJ across the country might be doing at his or her wedding reception that night? Are weddings the same across the country?

I've had the fortune of being able to see firsthand how weddings can be different as I was a DJ in Chicago for almost four years before moving to Dallas. I did some research on weddings in Dallas before moving but I didn't get a true sense of what they were like until I actually started DJing here.

When I was in Chicago, an average wedding reception was five and a half to six hours long. That included a full hour for cocktails, an hour and a half to two hours for dinner and another three hours for dancing. Since I've been in Dallas, my average wedding has been four hours long. The most common schedule here has included half an hour for cocktails (or they have cocktails in another room separate from the reception), one hour for dinner, and two hours for dancing.

I thought it would be a big challenge to transition from a six-hour wedding to a four-hour wedding. After my first few wedding receptions here I discovered how the weddings were different and what I needed to do differently in order to adjust. The main difference here in Dallas was buffet-style meals versus individually served meals in Chicago. The amount of time to eat is cut in half with the buffet setup.

I do think a DJ here in Dallas does have to be on his or her toes and really make sure to keep the evening moving. In Chicago, you had some wiggle room to stray from the schedule if there were any delays. In Dallas, even a minor delay of 10-15 minutes could make a big difference with how much time there is for dancing since the dancing portion is so much shorter.

Another significant difference is the amount of music you'll play in a night and the amount of level of energy from the crowd. In my experience, the Dallas events have more energy since it's a shorter reception and they're up and dancing quicker. In Chicago, guests have

been sitting around for so long and it's such a long day by the time it's time to start dancing that it can be a challenge to get people up. (I've experienced this myself as a guest at many weddings in Chicago, too!)

What does any of this have to do with you, the Phoenix DJ who always DJs in Phoenix? Well, besides simply being an interesting comparison, if you're DJing a wedding for a couple from New York they may want to change things up to have a wedding more in the style that they're used to. That's why it's great to network with DJs to find out what you'll need to know since this will be new territory for you. Visiting DJ message boards like ProDJ.com or going to the Mobile Beat conventions are great ways to meet DJs from other regions.

Check out what the following DJs had to say about weddings in their regions:

Rocky Bourg,  
DJ Music by Request  
New Orleans, Louisiana



**In which large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** New Orleans, Louisiana  
**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 3 (without ceremony) or 4 (with)  
**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 7:00 or 8:00 PM–10:00 or 11:00 PM  
**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 150–200

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** Buffet  
**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (i.e. polkas, etc.)?** "Second Line" by Stop Inc. (New Orleans Jazz), "Pre Game" by the LSU Band (fight song), "They All Asked for You" by The Meters (New Orleans-style R&B).  
**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Not want lighting.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** As with everything in New Orleans, there is much individual interpretation, personalization, and customization to wedding activities. Like the virtual nonexistence of structure in our unique culture in general, many brides want nothing more than a joyous, plenty dancin' party. The bountiful music grown and harvested in this region also provides many opportunities to "Nawlins-it-up."

Ron Ralph  
A DJ TO GO  
Pensacola, Florida



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Pensacola, Florida  
**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 4  
**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 6:00–10:00 PM  
**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 100–150  
**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** Buffet  
**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** Country and beach music.  
**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** No lighting.  
**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** Gorgeous beach ceremonies with the sun setting over the Gulf of Mexico. Destination weddings where the bride, groom and their close family and friends come in from all over the US to enjoy paradise and have a small intimate wedding and reception at a posh resort.

Allen Deneau  
Simplicity Entertainment  
Naperville, Illinois



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Chicago and suburbs  
**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 5–6 (usually 5.5)  
**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 5:30–7:00 PM start to 11:30–12:30 AM end  
**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 150–175  
**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Individually or family style, depending on specific location. Most (probably 85% or better) are individually plated.  
**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** Some polkas, house, and steppin'. Again, depending on the locale you may also have Italian or Greek. Definitely jazz and blues also. Traditions? Yeah, too-long receptions!



# ALL OVER

## SCAPE, FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Most want some, at least. After working with them sometimes we determine they want more than the basic, BUT they were afraid of the other DJ lighting they've seen. About 75% of my events I only use 2 Martin Acrobats.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** Lots of multiple-room receptions. Cocktails in one room, dinner in another, etc. Children are sometimes in different rooms as well.

Dodie Rahlmann  
Celebrate Disc Jockey Service  
St. Louis, Missouri



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** St. Louis and suburbs

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 5

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 7:00 PM–12:00 AM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 125–150

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Most (about 60%) are individual serving and the other 40% are buffet

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** None

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Just about all receptions have lighting—I think this is something the brides expect.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** Nothing

Patrick McDonald  
Twilight Entertainment  
Findlay, Ohio



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Toledo Metro Area (Tiffin & Findlay, OH)

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 6–8

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 4:00 PM–12:00 PM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 250–550

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Buffet 95%, Sit Down 5%

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?**

Dollar Dance, polkas in the German/Polish communities (e.g., Deshler, Toledo). Chicken Dance is huge here (I know most DJs don't want to hear that).

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** All want lighting.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** I do a lot of interaction and icebreakers. More brides are willing to pay more but expect that you entertain, not push buttons. Mini bike races are common at my weddings. The bride and groom both pick teams and compete for the checkbook or remote control. The bride and groom are refs and keep the race fair. Clients expect props for the YMCA and, Locomotion and I use cut out shark fins for Jimmy Buffet "Fins."

Chuck Lehnhard  
Maui Mobile Music  
Paia, Maui, Hawaii



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Maui (destination and local weddings)

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 3–4 hours for destination, 6 hours for local.

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 6:00–10:00 PM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 40 for destination, 400 or more for local.

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Family style is most popular with the local weddings. Uncle cooks, Grandma cooks, everyone helps. Lots of pan-Pacific food.

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** At a lot of local weddings they use the first dance as the money dance. Even when I tell people that the bride and groom want to wait, some of the people will still come up and put money in the bride's dress and the groom is to remove it with his teeth.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** I include a small lighting setup in my basic package so they all get it. Very rarely do they ever ask for an upgrade to the Intells.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** When I moved to Maui I thought that the music I would be playing would be Hawaiian or reggae, or "Jawaiian," but I play mostly the same music as I did in California. People show up in flip-flops, shorts and aloha shirts. I don't wear a tux as often as I did on the Mainland. The bride and groom are given special leis to wear, as are the parents and grandparents.

Sheldon Fingler  
Shades of Sound Disc Jockey Services /  
Infinite Entertainment & Event Services  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 7–8 hours

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 6:00 PM–1:00 AM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 150

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** Dinners are typically buffet but plated service is not uncommon.

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (i.e. polkas, etc.)?** It seems that having at least one Polka and Butterfly is common. I would not say that we have any regional dances.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** We have lighting at every event. In the past 19 years I have only had one request where they did not want lighting.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** I think the biggest difference between our receptions compared to the U.S. is that typically a family member is the emcee. Usually we do not have involvement until later in the evening. Having said that, I try to let customers know that by allowing our involvement earlier in the evening we can create a rapport with the guests much easier.



Rob Johnson  
The Music Man  
Fargo, North Dakota



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Fargo, North Dakota

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 4

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 8:30 PM–12:30 AM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 225

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Buffet and served are about equal.

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** A couple of polkas and waltzes.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** They ALL want lighting but nothing fancy or major.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** People call it a “wedding dance” in most cases. Most events around here do not have the DJ work with the caterer, photographer, etc. MOST just hire the DJ to perform the dance portion later in the evening. In South Dakota and some of the small towns around here, it is common to have the “wedding dance” at a public location and be open to the public. This creates an interesting situation when the venue (bar) is paying half and the couple is paying half. Who do you play to? The crowd that has nothing to do with the wedding or the wedding party? It seems like it would be easy to answer but it can get interesting. Small towns (population under 5000) are very different.

Jerry Beck  
Beck's Entertainment  
& DJ Services  
San Diego, California



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** San Diego, California

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 5

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 5 PM–10 PM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 150

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** Individually served.

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (i.e. polkas, etc.)?** No

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Not want lighting.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** Majority of the brides and grooms that I run across absolutely do not want the Chicken Dance or Macarena

Tom Labonte  
Heart Beat Disc-Jockeys  
Windsor/Essex County  
Ontario, Canada



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Windsor, Ontario, Canada

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 6–7 hours

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 6:00 PM–1:00 AM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 180

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** Family style

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** Windsor (and area) is very much a multicultural city. There are at least 4–5 Italian halls, 2 or 3 French halls, a German hall, a Greek hall, a Portuguese hall, a Lebanese hall—just to mention a few. In most cases, each nationality has their “music/dance” traditions. Personally, I handle a good portion of the French weddings. In most cases, I am asked to play some French music for the benefit of the guests from Quebec/New Brunswick.

As for a particular song that is played in this region, I found that for years, Canadian brides and grooms had never heard of the Electric Slide. In our area, we almost always get requests for Stevie Wonder’s “My Eyes Don’t Cry” a.k.a. “The Hustle,” which from my understanding is very similar to the Electric Slide. Although the Macarena and such may come and go, this Hustle seems to be here for the long haul.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Although many area DJs claim to use lighting regularly for weddings, I don’t push the issue and usually only get asked for lights about 10% of the time.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** More and more brides and grooms are booking us for “Post-wedding receptions.” They get married at a warm vacation spot and they have a reception shortly after their return home. The average brides and grooms are in their late twenties.

Eric Caldwell  
PolarSounds Entertainment  
Douglas, Alaska



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Juneau, Alaska

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 5–6 hours

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 6:00 PM is the most common start time

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 75–100

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Buffet

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** Both the Filipinos and Tlingits (Southeast Alaska Natives) attach money onto the couple using safety pins or tape. I haven’t seen this anywhere else.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** Since most of our venues are “view” properties with many windows and most weddings are at the time of

year when the sun is out until about midnight, most receptions do not require lighting.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** Salmon. Lots and lots of salmon. I am offered leftover salmon the way most DJs are offered leftover wedding cake, and that’s just the way I like it.

Bill Smith  
Magic of Music  
Raleigh, North Carolina



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Raleigh, North Carolina

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 4 hours

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 7:00 PM–11:00 PM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 100–150

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style or buffet?** 50% served, 50% buffet

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** There’s a line dance to “Atomic Dog” (George Clinton) that I get a lot. It’s like a modified Bus Stop.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** 80% want lighting

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** None

Mike Foxx  
Gold Plated Productions  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania



**In what large city do you DJ most of your wedding receptions?** Eastern Pennsylvania: Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton

**How many hours is the average wedding reception?** 5 hours

**What are the most common start and end times for receptions?** 5 PM–11 PM

**How many guests are usually at receptions?** 125

**Is it more common for dinner to be individually served, family style, or buffet?** Really depends on the hall. About half are formal country club sit-downs, the other half are family style fire hall meals.

**Are there any special traditions/songs specific to your region (e.g., polkas, etc.)?** Lots of polkas, Dollar Dance is popular in about half of the weddings and I believe the Chicken Dance is required by law.

**Is it more common for couples to want lighting at their reception or not want lighting?** The bride and groom usually want lights. Most guests would rather not be seen on the dance floor. My lights are fairly simple and not too bright for just that reason.

**Anything else you think is unique to wedding receptions in your region?** There is rarely any dancing between courses of a meal. We are not far from Philly or NYC, and out-of-town guests from bigger cities can never figure out why we do not do it. They figure we’re all Pennsylvania Dutch and naturally do things backward. ■



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# Fear Not the

By Mark Johnson

## A reminder that DJs bring more to the gig than songs and sound systems

**I**n recent issues of *Mobile Beat* I've read that mobile DJs have run into instances of the client considering utilizing an iPod® and a stereo system in lieu of hiring a professional DJ. This is not a new problem. Ever since music has been recorded there always has been the threat of a client or guest being able to assemble a decent collection of music and a decent sound system and avoiding the cost and bother of hiring a DJ.

We don't create the records, tapes, CDs, mini-discs or any other media that holds the music. And that includes the iPod or any other contemporary playback devices. We don't have an exclusive on the equipment either. Many of our clients may have a suitable home audio system, with possibly better fidelity. Sure, our equipment is considered professional, with advanced features and durability. But we all know of regular people who have sound systems in their living rooms that rival the best DJ equipment. And we don't perform the actual songs, practicing the vocals and instruments and mixing it together into a tolerable form. Virtually 100% of our songs are hits in their own form, with no help from us mobile DJs.

So what do we bring to the table? Many, many of our clients could simply write a check and have the exact equipment that we have. Plus, in a short period, they or their kids could download into an iPod the songs that exactly match our portable, core music collection.

### Full-Featured DJs

Actually, we bring a whole lot to the table. First and foremost is our experience in entertaining and managing 100, 200 or more people for a period of 3-4 hours or more. There is a reason that many DJs refer to themselves more often as Masters of Ceremonies. This is not just a title given to someone who can talk on a microphone. This title is awarded to someone who knows how to say the right thing at the right time.

**OUR ABILITY TO SORT THROUGH 5000, 10,000 OR MORE SONGS TO PRESENT THE BEST 80 SONGS THAT MATCH BOTH THE CLIENT'S DESIRES AND THOSE OF THE GUESTS IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.**

Second is the music. Sure, everyone will soon walk around with over 5,000 songs in their pocket, DJs, grandmas and anyone with an MP3 device. We all know that having 5,000 songs simply does not help you decide which songs to play. Since roughly 20 songs can be played in an hour, a 4 hour event will only need 80 of those 5,000 songs, with the other 4,920 songs being clutter.

Our ability to sort through 5000, 10,000 or more songs to present the best 80 songs that match both the client's desires and those of the guests is not to be taken lightly. There is a genuine craft to sequencing these songs in an appealing fashion, entertaining the maximum people at any one time, yet managing a degree of creativity from one event to another.

Even a client who is very well versed in pop music and has accumulated tens of thousands of songs on a laptop or iPod still doesn't have that intangible quality of being able to choose songs for an audience beyond him or herself. Songs like "Electric Boogie" (a.k.a. The Electric Slide), "YMCA," "Macarena" and other DJ standards rarely show up on personal MP3 players, as they are not great

"listening" songs. But they're great party songs. We all know that there's a big difference between listening songs and party songs.

### Broadcasting the Message

I am reminded of a few phrases that can be applied to cultivate in potential clients the good sense to hire a professional DJ instead of dragging out one's own stereo system. The first phrase was used by the Greyhound Bus company: "Leave the driving to us." Most everyone has a car but on certain occasions being able to sit back, relax and let someone else drive makes a lot of sense.

Another phrase I believe offered by Mark Twain is "He who has himself as a lawyer has a fool for a client." A court of law is not the place for an amateur lawyer wannabe trying to plea his or her own case. Sure, lawyers are the butt of many jokes, but are very necessary when facing other lawyers in court.

As professional mobile DJs, we can all easily agree with the logic behind hiring us for our client's events. But how do we get the message out to the general public that hiring a professional is truly the only way to go?



# ePod



Years ago the Ladies Garment Workers union embarked on an ad campaign informing the general public to "Look for the Union Label" when shopping for clothing. That label insured that the garment considered was made by union workers that held themselves to a higher standard than those of off-shore sweatshops with slave laborers and substandard equipment.

Here's an interesting dynamic. It wasn't the garment workers themselves that created the campaign and placed the ads on TV and other media. It was a higher organization, their labor union, that had a vested interest in the success of their workers. Perhaps we can turn to the many DJ and entertainment associations and put the ball in their court to promote our industry to the general public. We can talk amongst ourselves as much as we want at private trade shows or conferences. But the general public will never be informed of the downsides of using an iPod or even the problems with hiring a non-professional DJ, if the info is not disseminated.

If a DJ has to spend his time speaking of the virtues of hiring a professional DJ, he or she is only communicating to the general public one person at a time. If an association were to actually promote our virtues to the general public, the public would eventually weed out the non-professional DJs and other essentially harmful music providers.

Fear not the iPod. Carpenters aren't afraid of clients with hammers. Doctors aren't worried about patients with Band-Aids®. Chefs aren't afraid of customers with pots and pans. We should not be afraid of the general population (our clients) having personal MP3 players with large music collections. ■

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# Putting On a Different Kind of



## Ever thought about producing your own bridal show? Here's how...

By Paul Beardmore

**I started my DJ business in 1981, initially playing for school events and private parties. I wasn't known as a wedding DJ at that time, but I wanted more business. Breaking into the wedding market was a lot tougher than I anticipated.**

### Horror Show

I participated in my first bridal show in 1984. The local newspaper was the one and only bridal show producer at that time, and the price to participate was rather high; this was because the newspaper required an extensive advertising package in conjunction with the fee to participate in the show. I needed the business, so I bit the bullet, and paid to participate in my first bridal show.

The day of the bridal show, I arrived early to set up a very modest display. I encountered a fairly chaotic scene. The person in charge from the newspaper had not drawn up an accurate floor plan, and there were more vendors than the venue floor space allowed. Since I arrived early, I was one of the lucky vendors who got a table in the main ballroom. Other vendors were not so fortunate: they had to set up in a side room on 3' x 3' tables. The bridal shop owner who was doing the fashion show was irate, because there wasn't an area sufficient for the models to change. Additionally, there wasn't a stage that allowed the brides to adequately see the details of gowns the models were wearing.

Once I set up my display, I decided to browse the other vendor tables. I knew there would be other DJs there however, I was surprised to learn that there were a total of NINE DJs who were participating in this small bridal show that netted a total of 80 registered brides.

There were a host of other glitches that the newspaper representative didn't plan for as well. But despite the lack of preparation on the part of the newspaper rep, I booked a few weddings from my first bridal show.

### I Did It My Way

The following year, I participated in the same bridal show. This time, there were eleven DJs, and 75 registered brides. While some of the issues from the previous year were corrected, the newspaper rep's planning skills still

left a lot to be desired, and there were a lot of disgruntled vendors. The newspaper rep had sold tables to fourteen photographers, and none of them were happy.

I booked several weddings from the show, but I was barely able to break even on the fee to participate. This was because the high expense of the advertising packages that were required to participate. One thing was very clear: while the newspaper representative was a great salesperson, she had no clue about how to be an event planner. Additionally, because she wasn't a BUSINESS OWNER, she didn't understand the concept that her vendors needed to get a positive return on their INVESTMENT to participate in the show. This prompted me to make the decision not to participate in this show the following year, and in fact, I decided to produce my own.

### Caution!

Producing your own bridal show comes with a couple of basic prerequisites: first, you must have good organizational skills, and second, you have to have the *time* necessary to invest in producing the show. Your skills to plan, organize and produce a bridal show can have a lasting effect on your reputation as a DJ in the local wedding industry. You are better off NOT producing your own bridal show if you can't do it the right way.

Let's assume that you have great organizational and interpersonal skills, and begin the process of producing your very first bridal show.

### Plan!

So how do you begin the process of producing a bridal show? I highly recommend creating a business plan. You need to estimate the costs for the venue, advertising, staging, and other incidentals such as programs that need to be printed. It is necessary to compare your estimated costs with the revenue you hope to obtain from booth sales to vendors.

### Get in Fashion

Many people might suggest choosing a venue first, and then the date. While this sounds logical, you really can't begin the process of producing a bridal show without FIRST securing a bridal shop that is willing to produce a fashion show. It is very difficult to have a bridal show without a fashion show component; securing a reputable bridal shop is imperative. Most brides-to-be attend a bridal show to see the latest fashions in wedding gowns and bridesmaids dresses. Without that, you are doomed to fail. And you can't get just ANY bridal shop, either.

It is essential to get a reputable bridal shop able to put together a good fashion show, so it will reflect well on you and your bridal show. The



bridal shop owner has to be able to organize 50 to 100 dresses, write informative descriptions for each dress, and develop a plan to ensure that the dresses are presented in a specific sequence so that the descriptions match the dresses that the models are displaying on the stage. This is a more difficult task than meets the eye; if the bridal shop owner doesn't have her act together, your fashion show can become an embarrassment to you and a liability to your show.

I prefer that the bridal shop provide a woman to emcee the fashion show (just the fashion show, not the rest of the event). For me, there is something weird about a guy offering advice on how certain wedding gowns are more conducive for large-busted brides, for example, and similar descriptive information common to fashion shows. If the bridal shop doesn't have a woman who can emcee the fashion show, perhaps you have a female DJ on staff that can do it.

Often there are multiple fashion shows during a bridal show. It is fairly critical that the bridal shop have the ability to stay within the time constraints allotted for each fashion show. Good communication prior to the bridal show is essential.

### Venue Menu

Next comes your selection of the venue. You need to choose the best venue that can accommodate your vendors, meet the fashion show requirements (including having enough seating for brides-to-be), and adequate parking available. Choosing a venue because you are especially friendly with the venue manager is a big mistake, if it doesn't have the necessary facilities. A venue with a preexisting stage is a plus, so long as it meets the other space requirements. Otherwise, you will have to rent staging, which adds to your expenses.

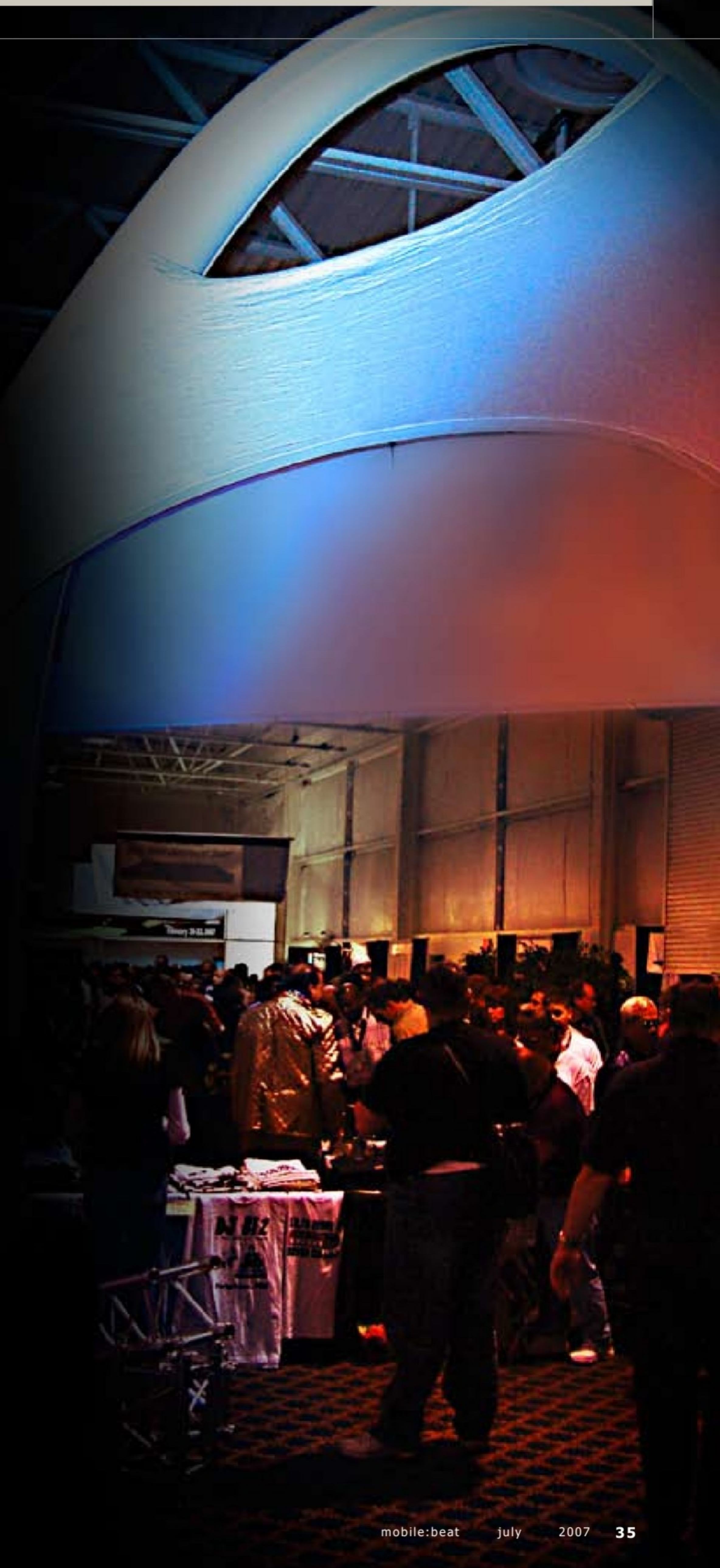
The bridal shop usually has 15 to 30 models, if they know what they are doing. You will need a separate room with enough space to accommodate the dresses and the models, and the room needs to be within a reasonable walking distance to the fashion show stage. I highly recommend making a site survey with the bridal shop owner to determine the suitability of the venue.

Tables or booths? This is an important question, which you have to address in your business plan. Pipe & drape booths offer a much more professional look to your show, as well as providing a system to section off open areas. They also add to your expenses. The venue floor plan, number of vendors and cost of the pipe & drape rentals are all important factors in determining their value to your show. Some companies specialize in exhibit rentals, and typically offer a more competitive price than the average rental company.

When you negotiate the contract terms for the venue, make sure you negotiate the terms of postponing the show due to inclement weather. The venue should agree to a backup "snow date." If you have scheduled your event on a Sunday in January, this usually isn't an issue.

### Timing Is Everything

When is the best time of year for a bridal show? The date you choose is critical for many reasons. First, the timing of your show should provide you and your vendors with the best return on their investment; that's the mentality that should drive most of the decisions for your show. In most cases, having a bridal show in March or April is a waste of time—most brides have already secured their main vendors by then. Scheduling a bridal show on a date that competes with other shows is not usually a good thing. The bridal show I produce is always the first Sunday in January—unless the first Sunday falls on January 1, which is a holiday. Having the first show in the "bridal show season" is advantageous to your vendors. The old saying "the early bird gets the worm" definitely applies. Sundays are usually more appealing to many vendors, since they are busy on Saturdays.





## Selling the Show

Now that you have your bridal shop, the venue, and the date selected, it is time to start soliciting vendors. In most markets, this is more challenging than one would think. Business owners are inundated with phone calls from people selling ads for the Yellow Pages, radio stations, and other related media that are designed to promote their businesses. When you call other wedding vendors about your show, you are just another salesperson to them. This means you have to be effective in the way you present yourself and your bridal show.

A basic brochure, postcard, or flier is a must. A Web site is even better. Ideally, you would have a brochure, flier, or postcard in addition to a Web site. You have to have something for the vendor to refer to that provides an overview of what your show has to offer, the cost to participate, and any other critical information, such as payment deadlines, display restrictions, etc. I think it is smart to limit the number of vendors in each category. This is a huge selling point for any vendor who has ever participated in a bridal show with a high number of direct competitors.

The size of a given bridal show is largely dictated by the number of actual registered brides. The number of vendors per category can also be dictated by the amount of available floor space at the venue. Some shows limit vendors to two per category. The show I produce limits three vendors per category. I recommend starting out small, and grow your show based on the amount of registered brides you draw, compared to the number of interested vendors who want to participate. If your first show has a limit of two vendors per category, and you draw 125 registered brides, you can afford to increase the vendor per category limit to three. In contrast, if you draw 200 registered brides, you may be able to bump that figure up to four vendors per category.

In theory, the more vendors you have, the higher the advertising budget you have to work with. A higher advertising budget usually translates into more registered brides—but be careful. There does come a point where increased advertising does not result in a proportional increase in registered brides. Your market and experience will ultimately determine this.

I can't stress enough how important it is to use a vendor contract. A vendor contract for your bridal show isn't any less important than the contract you use for your DJ business. All terms, conditions and restrictions should be identified in the contract. Are two vendors allowed to share tables? Do you allow vendors to hand out business cards of other business who are not paying to participate in your show? What is your cancellation policy? Are vendors required to provide door prizes? If so, are there restrictions on the type and value of door prizes? All of this needs to be spelled out in your vendor bridal show contract to avoid any misunderstandings or hard feelings.

Setting up a system to track vendors who sign up to participate in your show is critical. This process should be familiar to any working DJ—you need to know which vendors you have sent a pending contract to, as well as confirmed vendors who have given a deposit and/or made final payment. Since your advertising budget is paid for by the vendor fees, I highly recommend that final payment be due to you at least six weeks prior to the bridal show.

The manner in which you promote your bridal show can make or break the success of the event. Your goal is to draw as many registered brides-to-be as possible. Most bridal shows rely on newspaper ads and, in some cases, radio advertising. Radio advertising greatly depends on your market, since this can be prohibitively expensive. Use your vendors to help promote the bridal show in addition to the traditional media. Each vendor who has a store front should be given a bridal show poster for their store, and fliers to give to their customers.

The information for each bride-to-be is important data that you will need to gather and send to your vendors after the bridal show. Brides-to-be usually bring one or more friends and/or family members to the show. Vendors are usually not interested in the data for anyone other than the actual bride and groom. I participated in one bridal show where the show producer provided a list of all persons who attended—and did not designate which names were brides-to-be, and which names were not. Obviously, this was an error that resulted in unhappy vendors.

Make sure that your registration system has all of the basic information – name, address, phone number, email address, wedding budget, and, of course, the wedding date! Asking the bride-to-be how she heard about your bridal show is also important for helping you to assess the value of specific media choices you made to promote the show.

## Get Ready, Get Set...

Another of the issues you will need to address is the schedule or format of the show. What time will the doors open to guests? How many fashion shows will

you have, and what time will you schedule them? When will you draw for door prizes? Will you have any seminars or workshops? Both vendors and guests will ask these questions. Creating a basic bridal show program will help answer these questions. The program should be given to each bride-to-be when she checks in at the registration table.

The week prior to the bridal show, e-mail your vendors with a list of important reminders. Are you going to have registration bags with vendor promotional materials? Make sure your vendors provide these in advance, so they can be inserted into your registration bags. Additionally, the time they can access the venue to set up, load-in and load-out procedures, reminders to bring door prizes, and reminders on restrictions of promoting other businesses not participating in the show are all important things to address.

You should also have a system in place for communicating the status of the show, in the event of snow or inclement weather, especially if you live in an area subject to Old Man Winter! Your newspaper advertisements should contain your phone number and Web site for this very reason. Should there be any question, both vendors and brides-to-be need to be able to determine the status of the show.

## It's Showtime!

The day of the bridal show, make yourself available by walking the floor, offering assistance to your vendors, collecting door prizes, and making sure everyone is happy. As the bridal show producer, you will need more qualified help to staff your booth. Your vendors will have questions and need assistance prior to, and during the show. If you want them to come back next year, you will need to make it a priority to provide good customer service for them. This means that you won't be able to personally sell your DJ business quite as much as you normally would.

Expect brides-to-be to arrive early. It isn't advisable to open the doors to the exhibit area until all vendors are set up and know that the doors are opening to the public. Make sure that music and noise levels are low enough to allow vendors to speak to potential customers. Keep everyone apprised of what's going on by making regular announcements.

Prior to the first fashion show, you should create a dramatic introduction to energize your audience. My bridal show starts with a short (three-minute), high-energy video that shows the bride, groom, and wedding party having the time of their life. Use your emcee skills to welcome your guests, and tell them what you have planned for them. If your bridal show is scheduled for January, remember that most brides were busy during the holidays, and are now starting to focus on the details of their wedding. Use that to your advantage. Get them excited about their upcoming wedding, and you will sell yourself and your entertainment services without sounding like an infomercial.

## Improving Your Follow-Through

Some things may arise that you didn't plan for or expect. Do your best to make common sense adjustments on the fly. You do this every weekend for the weddings you perform, so this should be second nature to you. Make certain that you keep a running list of things that worked well, as well as things that need to be improved. Listen to your vendors and document their feedback they provide at the bridal show. Follow up with them by providing a post-bridal show survey. By demonstrating your sincere interest in making improvements to the show, you are far more likely to get most of your vendors back for the next year's bridal show.

Once the bridal show is complete, you will need to compile a list of registered brides, with all of their contact and wedding data. In addition to providing a basic listing, take the time to provide your vendors with a preprinted set of mailing labels. This makes it easy for them to do follow-up mailings after the show, and gives your show added value in the eyes of the vendor.

If you have taken the time to read this article from start to finish, you most likely have noticed a significant number of similarities between being a DJ for weddings and being a bridal show producer. Customer service, organizational skills, ability to energize an audience, and postevent follow-up are important part factors that contribute to success or failure in both arenas. Are you ready for the challenge? ■

*Paul Beardmore has owned and managed The DJ Connection in Front Royal, VA, since 1981. He has presented seminars on multisystem management at numerous national trade shows, serves as the dean of DJ University (<http://dju.prodj.com>), and established the original DJ Cruise convention.*



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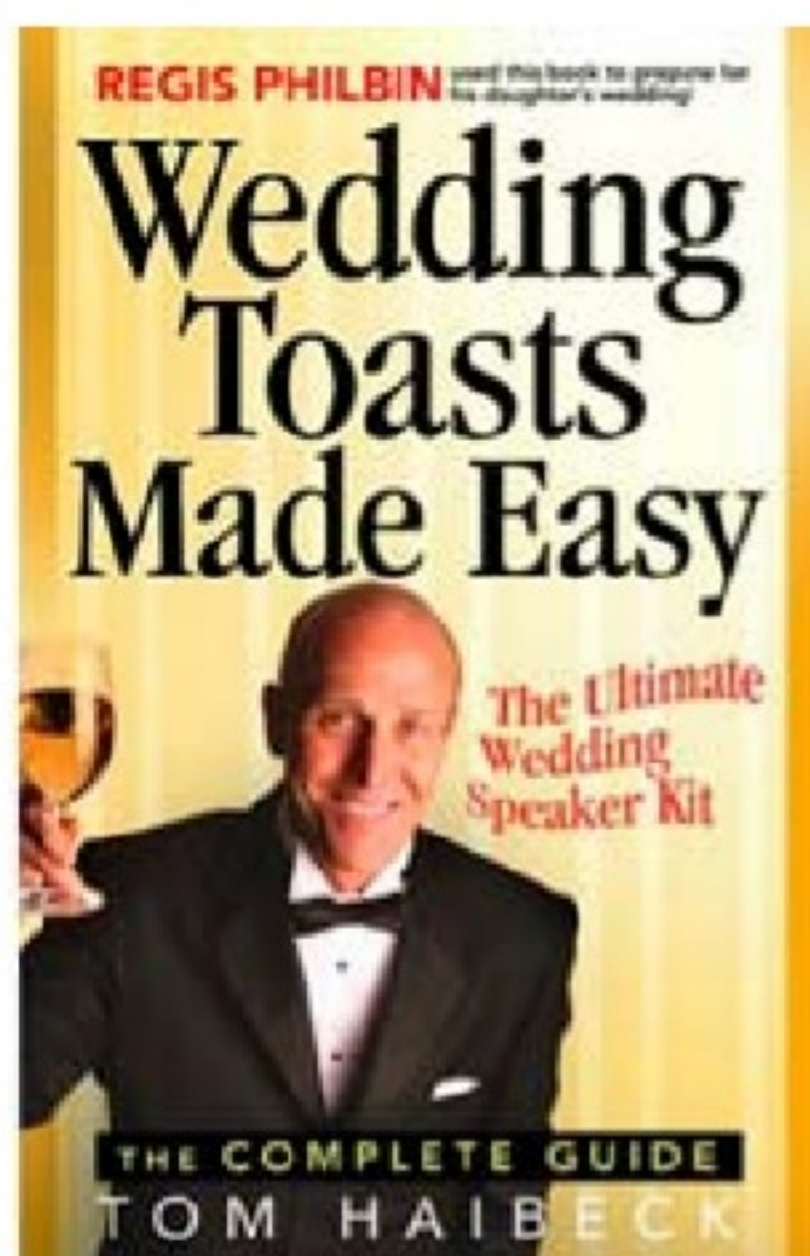
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By Tom Haibeck

**A** few years ago, I had the privilege of watching one of the world's top wedding disc jockeys work his magic at a wedding in Long Beach, California. Having been in the wedding industry for the past 25+ years, I've seen my share of great weddings—along with a whole lot of bad ones. This one ranks right at the top.

The reception was held outside, at the Long Beach Museum of Art (visit [www.lbma.org](http://www.lbma.org) for a look at the venue). It's a magnificent facility, with a grass patio overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The weather was California-perfect that day, with neither a breath of wind nor a single cloud overhead. And as the sun melted into the horizon and night fell upon us, the evening came alive with candle-lit tables and twinkling lights all around.

Adding to that night of perfection was the presence of a great group of guests. The marriage enjoined a firefighter with a police officer, so the audience was mainly comprised of their colleagues. And while the mixing of the police department with the fire department can sometimes spark fireworks, in this case there was just a friendly rivalry that spawned some hilarious toasts and evolved into some hard-core partying (the hosts even chartered a bus to drive everyone home afterward).

But the key factor in the success of that particular event was the masterful work of the man at the podium. He was like a seasoned conductor who used all his tools to quite literally "play" his audience, bringing them from a comfortable mellow to a glorious high, then back

# THE PERFECT WEDDING DJ

One wonderful reception, one brilliant event,  
and the one DJ/MC behind it all

down to a pleasant finish that focused on the collective joy of a wedding well celebrated.

## The Perfect Start to a Perfect Night

Having organized and presided over my share of special events over the years, I can say with absolute certainty that one of the keys to a great event is to make guests feel welcome the moment they arrive—and music can play a big part in that (along with friendly "greeters" at the door offering flutes of champagne). If you can put a smile on their face when they arrive at the event, it will often extend right through to the end of it.

And that's precisely what happened that afternoon: guests were warmly greeted, the champagne flowed and the "vibe" was immediately defined with a selection of light orchestral pieces that said, "this promises to be a fun, classy event."

Once everyone was seated, the wedding DJ (now serving as event MC) offered a formal welcome (on behalf of the bride and groom) and then immediately oriented them as to how the event would unfold. He was gracious with his approach—upbeat, sincere, and genial—but slightly low key and self-effacing. His focus was on the bride and groom; they were the stars, not him. His goal was to honor them and to lead their guests through an evening that would celebrate their marriage (rather than showcase his talents).

He took immediate command of the event with the kind of confidence and professionalism that is the hallmark of all great MCs. While he had great presence and a deep, melodious voice, I think the main reason he was able to so effectively engage his audience was the fact that he was so thoroughly prepared.

## Doing Your Homework

He rolled into his intro like a kid entering a classroom on the day of an exam, totally confident in the knowledge that he had done his homework and would ace the exam. This was his event—he was the guy who had helped the bride and groom plan it from start to finish—and he could hardly wait for it to get underway.

He had met with the couple well in advance of the wedding to map out a detailed agenda (in this case, he had filled out five pages of notes that accounted for every element of the event, from the manner of welcome to the eventual wind-down and bidding goodnight). In his words, it was the "script" he would use to direct the wedding (in the same way that a movie director would use a script to guide the production of a film).

He had made sure to get final approval of that agenda from the bridal couple so as to avoid any misunderstandings. And he had shared copies of that agenda with each of the other vendors involved (photographer, videographer, caterer, wedding planner) to help ensure everyone was quite literally on the same page throughout the night.

He had also reviewed a detailed checklist with the bridal couple that covered everything from the availability of power for his gear to the selection of music throughout the event. He knew precisely where the event was to be held, when it should start, when it should end, and what it should "look like" through the eyes of the host (in this case, it was decidedly laid back, informal, and designed for lots of dancing and frivolity).

## The Grandest Entrance Yet

He orchestrated a grand entrance like none other I had seen. Again, he had done his homework by asking the bride and groom to provide background on each member of their wedding party; then, with the couple's permission, he had contacted each one to conduct a brief interview designed to draw out a bit of "color" for their introduction (e.g., "How did you meet the bride and groom?" "What words of advice would you offer the bride about living with the groom?" "What's the best thing that's ever happened to you?" "If you could have dinner with anyone in the world, who would that be?").

He then used that information to assemble some insightful—and often hilarious—introductions that were accompanied by a particular song to match the personality of each person being introduced. He even added sound effects and prerecorded material to each intro. The guests loved it, the members of the bridal party each felt recognized, and with the audience now primed and ready to party, the bride and groom made their grand entrance to an absolute roar of cheers,



laughter, and applause. Believe me, this wedding was off to a great start.

The energy from that opening had everyone sky high, and the only thing I can liken it to is the experience of being “warmed up” by a comedian prior to the star’s big entrance (if you’ve ever attended a taping of *The Tonight Show* or *The David Letterman Show*, you’ll know what I’m talking about). And that buzz carried right through the entire event.

A formal dinner followed, and our MC recognized a few special guests and read some congratulatory notes and e-mails from guests unable to attend. He also entertained everyone with a little “game show” routine that tested guests’ knowledge of the wedding couple’s history together...and that, too, resulted in some truly hilarious moments.

Again, music set the mood. In this case, it was comprised mainly of jazzy little numbers that were never overwhelming but which nevertheless got the audience tapping their feet and primed for the dance that was to come.

### Wedding Toasts Made Easy

Dinner was followed by a round of toasts—and again, the MC truly impressed me with his professionalism and attention to detail. Each of the “toasters” had been briefed in advance about the approximate time they would be expected to speak, the suggested length of their toast (no longer than three to five minutes, max) and their particular spot in the order of toasts.

They had also been given a quick lesson on the use of the microphone and offered the opportunity to experiment with it prior to the start of the reception. And finally, the MC made sure to offer a brief but classy introduction for each of the people chosen to speak (“And now I’d like to welcome the bride’s brother, James O’Brien, to offer a toast to the bride.”).

The toasts were excellent—no drunken diatribes, no horribly unprepared rambles, and no material that could be considered Restricted Adult (and pardon the plug, but that’s because each of the speakers had been provided with a copy of my book, *Wedding Toasts Made Easy* six weeks prior to the wedding, along with a personalized note from the bride and groom to thank them for their time in preparing the toast and to offer the book as a gift to guide them in their efforts).

The traditional cake cutting and round of first dances followed—again, seamlessly coordinated by our master of ceremonies (who had also “blocked out” the best locations for the photographer/videographer to setup and capture the moment).

### Dancing under the Stars

But it was the dance that proved to be the highlight of the event. And again, I credit the DJ for making that happen.

Like the event itself, the playlist was carefully designed to offer a steady “build” in intensity, followed by a gradual return to the more mellow “good night” numbers. The guests had a rollicking good time; the dance floor was pretty much full the entire night. And our party host shared a couple of secrets with me that I think helped make that possible.



First of all, with the agreement of the facility manager and wedding planner, he had recommended a slight reduction to the size of the dance floor. Through his trained eye, he had immediately determined that the relationship between size of guest list vs. size of dance floor was disproportionate. There simply weren’t enough guests to keep the dance floor full (as was originally configured).

But through the magic of downsizing (in this case, simply moving some tables closer to the dance floor), just a handful of dancers could provide the illusion that the floor was active and the party was nonstop. That, in turn, seemed to encourage a steady influx of dancers throughout the night. (Of course, another theory was based on the vast amount of booze consumed by the off-duty fire and police officers, knowing that a bus was waiting to drive them home.)

Factor #2, however, was perhaps the key reason for a flooded dance floor. And it’s an incredibly simple concept that’s often overlooked by wedding disc jockeys. Our “spinner” in this case had presented the bride and groom with a suggested song list that was pretty much entirely based on “dance-ability.” He also got permission from the bride and groom to refuse to play any request that wasn’t similarly “dance-able.” The

result: No sudden transition to the kind of heavy metal or country classic that can clear a dance floor faster than a cowboy with his boots off.

The evening concluded with a heartfelt “farewell” for the couple. The reception was a huge success, and everyone seemed genuinely happy for the new couple.

I also noticed a steady stream of guests asking the disc jockey for his card. That’s apparently the primary source of new business for him—guests who see him perform and referrals from satisfied clients. There is no better way to build a service business—focus on providing exceptional value and the phone will continue to ring.

So who was this mysterious master of wedding entertainment? You might know him. His name is Peter Merry—DJ, author, seminar speaker, and past president of the American Disc Jockey Association. And on a near perfect night beneath the stars of Southern California, he was about as perfect as you can get (unless, of course, I had been the MC). ■

*Tom Haibeck is the author of The Wedding MC handbook and Wedding Toasts Made Easy, both of which can be purchased from his website at [WeddingToasts.com](http://WeddingToasts.com) or at major bookstores throughout North America.*



# I could a book...

Peter Merry's quest: Banish McWeddings and build unique reception experiences



By Anthony B. Barthel

**A**t the Mobile Beat Conference in February, many DJs planned their seminar attendance around one in particular: Peter Merry's. And why not? He's been a popular speaker in the past, having first stepped on the stage in 2001 as part of Mark Ferrell's introduction to "Getting What You're Worth." Merry had helped generate interest in his 2007 appearance with buttons, buzz on Web sites and more. So when the room was filled to capacity, it wasn't much of a surprise.

#### What's the Big Idea?

This time the presentation centered on Merry's new book, *The Best Wedding Reception Ever*. The self-published work promises readers ideas to plan their wedding celebration in unique and creative ways, and offers tips, ideas and suggestions that range from common sense to uncommonly great. Merry also revealed a new trade association called the Wedding Entertainment Directors' Guild™ (WEDGuild) which he has trademarked.

You would think that planning a successful wedding reception wouldn't generate any controversy, but some of the ideas presented in the book have created a storm of protests from DJs around the country. While there are certainly plenty of DJs who love the ideas, many sit in front of their computers directing ire at Merry on chat boards. He confidently responds with his ideal that a professional DJ is someone who treats the business with a professional attitude, which, according to him, includes charging a "professional fee." By his own definition, this means charging customers enough to provide a decent living for the DJ.

Whether one ascribes to the ideals in the book, there are a lot of points that can help a bride generate a fun wedding reception by her own definition. The book is quickly getting into the hands of brides, as well as those on the business end of weddings, and the reviews are starting to come in.

"From wedding professionals who aren't DJs, I've had very, very positive reactions. I've had very positive remarks and requests to see bonus materials." (Those bonus materials are available for registered users at [www.thebestweddingreceptionever.com](http://www.thebestweddingreceptionever.com).) It's part of a plan to educate brides on how to plan a very successful wedding but not with fancy flowers or intricate linens. It's with entertaining ideas that involve all the guests and thrill the participants and planners alike.

Merry has also pitched DJs on the idea that they could offer the books as gifts at bridal shows. DJs ran with the idea, buying cases to take home as gifts or to sell on their own. The result was that Merry went home with empty boxes after bringing 500 books to the conference.

#### Growing a Book

The idea for the book came back in July 1999. In those days, Peter Merry would have a booth at bridal shows and he noticed that at the shows, or in book stores, there were plenty of resources for brides but all of them focused on the appearance of the wedding.

"I saw it as a big gaping hole of information in the wedding industry and I said to myself that someone should write a book about it—and that I should be that somebody. Nobody covered how to make a wedding entertaining from A to Z." So he started writing. The book started as a booklet, which he would pass out at two-hour workshops that he conducted in Southern California; but soon chapters started forming for the present book.

"The thing I've come to realize over the years is that the wedding magazines and books have been selling the image of a wedding, but not the experience. They show them how to make it look but not how to make it move from one moment to the next."

The first printing blew out the door in record time, so there was a second and then a third printing, each in groups of 500. Finally, Merry went for it big time, and ran 10,000 books. Now the challenge begins.

The author has already been on TV for three interviews with local morning shows, had a radio interview, and even one on a podcast. The publicity machine is starting to hum.



# write

**"...THE WEDDING MAGAZINES AND BOOKS HAVE BEEN SELLING THE IMAGE OF A WEDDING, BUT NOT THE EXPERIENCE." — PETER MERRY**

But it's not easy getting yourself on TV. The first interview came with the help of fellow Mobile Beat presenter and DJ, Randy Bartlett. Bartlett was involved with a local bridal show whose organizers had contacts at a local TV station. When they found out what Merry was talking about, he was booked on the morning show.

From that one interview, others followed. "It's like a snowball. Once you do a little more people recognize that you're doing it and they're more than willing to open the door. It helps getting a TV interview when you already have one."

## Controversy, McWeddings

So what about this business of saying that many part-time DJs are not professional? "The vast majority of people doing this part-time make up the majority of our industry—and the vast majority of the people doing this part-time suck." Those are strong words, to be sure, but Merry insists that many DJs do not take the profession seriously. Even many multi-op owners offer their DJs little or no training in wedding entertainment.

Merry's own career as a DJ was proof of this. In 1992, he worked in the field of high-speed culinary arts (fast food). Like many in that business, he thought his job was terrible so he started looking elsewhere. One of the ways he sought employment was through the Yellow Pages, just seeing what professions appealed to him. When he got to the DJ section, he knew he had found an answer.

He called a few companies and eventually went to work for one who put him on a karaoke job the week after the interview. No training, no background, just a job. Fortunately, that first job went well, with Merry having the guests dancing despite not having the ability to truly mix music.

With the success of one performance under his belt, Merry was assigned to a wedding the following weekend. Unfortunately, the company gave him their worst equipment and the event went very poorly, with technical glitches of all sorts including skipping songs. Merry felt his own excellent performance was obscured by the unreliable gear. However, the caterer complained to the DJ company that Merry didn't know what

he was doing, so he was pulled off weddings and got to roadie for the company's owner for six months.

During that time he watched the DJ owner of the company conduct the exact same performance week in and week out. Did he learn anything? Yes. "I learned that it was okay to roll up your sleeves after the formalities were done. I learned that it was okay to do the same thing week in and week out. I learned that it was okay to be bored with the routine of the same performance and put that face on toward the guests." He describes the experience as "McWeddings."

He also learned that no training and education meant little value as a performer, meaning he was up at 4:00 in the morning throwing papers for the Orange County Register to make ends meet.

Peter Merry started his own DJ company and also had his own wedding celebration in December 1994. He figured things would be great at \$400 per performance and that he could sell enough weddings to support him and his new wife, Lisa. He was wrong, and by June 1995 they no longer had a place to live.

To support himself, he took all sorts of jobs that he hated and got back on his feet. He still never lost the passion for performing in front of an audience and it was during one of those performances that a photographer mentioned a DJ he had worked with who caused the guests to laugh and cry while he told their story. That DJ was Mark Ferrell. Peter became determined to speak with him.

After some searching, he found Ferrell but the DJ had a gatekeeper—his wife, Rebecca—who wouldn't let a competitor poke him for information. Despite multiple phone calls, Merry didn't get to speak with Mark Ferrell for six months. Still, he learned a lot from Rebecca. In fact, it was she who convinced him to raise his prices and eventually even sent him a lead with the promise that he would charge \$800 for the performance. He booked the performance.

"I was euphoric. I couldn't believe it. I just got paid twice what I normally got paid and I got half up front!"

Over time Peter Merry and Mark Ferrell became good friends and shared many ideas and resources. Merry also increased his pricing to the present day, where he now charges \$5,000 for a wedding reception performance—and gets it. Part of his success comes from offering a unique brand of wedding entertainment, but he insists all DJs can have their own style and vision. Each performance should be a unique celebration—not just from one DJ to the next, but from one couple to the next.

So what's next for Southern California's "Fun Wedding Guy™"? One of the things Merry spoke about at the conference workshop was an anticipated appearance on the Oprah. He estimates that he'll be on the show some time in



September or October, but the demand for his being on there won't come from DJs pitching Oprah. It will come from brides who share with her stories about how Merry's ideas changed their lives.

He also has a forthcoming DVD project done in collaboration with Randy Bartlett that will be a visual version of the book, of sorts.

By creating controversy, Peter Merry is creating interest and interest breeds demand. But his ultimate desire is that his ideas and vision help brides have what to each of them is best wedding reception...ever. ■

The Best Wedding Reception Ever (\$24.95, 208 pages) is available at Amazon.com or through [www.thebestweddingreceptionever.com](http://www.thebestweddingreceptionever.com).





DJs need to remember that all aspects of an event are important



# Working *with* other Wedding Vendors

By Mike Ryan  
a.k.a. Dr. Frankenstand

**W**hen I was asked to write about my experiences working with wedding vendors, a couple of words immediately sprung to mind: respect and teamwork.

My perspective goes beyond a simple “us and them” relationship: I’ve walked a while in their shoes. During a short stint with a theme party production house, I must have put on hundreds of tablecloths, chair covers, chair cover sashes, and an equal number of centerpieces; in case you had any doubt, it is definitely laborious and boring. In the navy I had my share of galley (kitchen) duty—swabbing decks, cleaning tables, washing pots, pans, and dishes—not fun. During college, I took a photography class. I hated the developing chemicals and squinting into a camera gave me a reverse sense of claustrophobia. No doubt, you’ve had some similar experiences along the way. Welcome to the wedding vendor’s world.

## Reception Team Roster

I firmly believe that good DJ karma starts from the bottom up. Many times after I’ve packed up my equipment and I’m ready to leave I’ve noticed the catering staff still toiling away, cleaning up the mess left behind. I always clean up my area, whether it’s leftover gaffers tape, soda cans, or just removing the tablecloth and those little plastic thingies that hold it on. Someone had to set up the table and tablecloth for me—why not return the favor? More often than not, I’ll ask the catering staff if I can help them finish up. They always say “no, thanks” but I know they appreciate the offer. And who knows, maybe, just maybe, they’ll tell their boss and more work may come my way. But like in the movie *Pay It Forward*, I don’t count on it. It’s a team effort and the event isn’t really over until the venue is locked up.

This example equally applied to all wedding vendors in some way. You can team up with the photographer by keeping him/her informed of different activities coming up that need to be photographed. Then, when you ask for a picture of your full dance floor, he or she may be more amenable to sending you a copy.

How important is teamwork and respect to caterers? A past article on working with caterers quotes kitchen pros as stating: “The DJ is key to a smooth running event,” and “It’s critical for everyone, including the DJ, to be on the same page” and “The relationship with a mobile DJ is based on trust, consistency and fulfilled expectations.” If the catering staff gets slammed, I try to help them out. It blows away guests when they see me, the DJ, helping the catering staff clear away plates. Again, it’s about team work.

Teamwork is paramount in the hotel industry. The hotel’s catering managers and coordinators have the heavy responsibility of putting together teams of experts, including DJs, for most if not all of the noncorporate parties. One catering manager says, “Any DJ I hire must be



a team player and they need to remember that all aspects of an event are important!"

A sense of camaraderie is also important. With so many Spanish-speaking employees in the hotel industry here in my Southern California stomping grounds, I like to play Latin music for them while I'm setting up before an event.

Talent agents also weighed in on teamwork: "If you want to approach a talent agent, let them know that you are willing to become part of the sales process, thus becoming part of their 'team!' And the team is there for one reason only: to give the end client the best event possible so they will come back time after time and recommend us to others." All the talent agents I interviewed for a previous article agreed: "If you work with a TA you should be ethical, loyal to your agent, and you should remember that you are part of a team whose job it is to make the client's dreams come true."

Other wedding team members who need to be mentioned include wedding planners and ceremony officiants (ministers, rabbis, etc.). My experience working with officiants has been an easy and mostly enjoyable one, except for the occasional one who shows up late. Wedding planners, on the other hand, can be more of a challenge to work with. A new trend in the wedding planning world is the "day of" wedding planner. These planners are the "iPod weddings" of the wedding planning profession and are a real thorn in the side of traditional WPs. The first "day of" planner I worked with gave me her convoluted reception schedule at the very last minute before

## You can only win the reception game as a member of the team.

the Grand Entrance. She had the couple's last name wrong; I announced them as it was written and ended up looking like the fool.

Most mobile DJs appreciate how difficult a job a traditional wedding planner has. I hear horror stories from my WP friends about their dealings with brides-to-be. They have a lot more patience than I will ever have. I always defer to them because of the nature of their business; they can spend hundreds of hours with the couples in the planning stages of a wedding. Of course, some WPs think they are the absolute rulers of reception schedules. Personally, I would like to see wedding planners just deal with everything up to the ceremony and leave the reception planning and coordination to the professional entertainers—the DJs. With that said, most WPs appreciate what mobile DJs bring to the wedding team.

When you've graduated to the professional level (which you probably have, if you're reading *Mobile Beat*) you'll find that you're working with many other team members of equal status. They

know they are professionals and act accordingly—and you should, too.

### Join the Club

Surprisingly, the best teams I've experienced are my two local DJ associations. I have been truly impressed and am proud to report that all members share extra work, ideas, music, and even equipment with each other. When one of our association members had all his equipment stolen, everyone pitched in to help him. I gladly gave him two spare speaker stands.

One little concluding postscript: Some people disagree with me when I say that, even though DJs are entertainers, I think we're more aligned with the hospitality industry. I get far more work through caterers, meeting planners, destination management companies, photographers, and wedding planners (ie., the hospitality industry) than I ever do from members of the entertainment industry! And from my experience, the hospitality industry is a very tight club. Once you're in it, respect the team and you'll have plenty of work. Respect and teamwork is what being a professional wedding reception vendor is all about. ■

*Mike Ryan started writing for news radio. He also DJ'd on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike and is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands! Mike also works part time as a DMC tour guide. He has been the president of the San Diego Professional Tour Guide Association, a board member of his local NACE chapter, and is currently the secretary of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.*

# DJ Skirts

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# DRESS

## (AND YOUR GEAR) FOR SUCCESS

Some thoughts on presenting a tasty visual image

By Stu Chisholm

**W**hen meeting with clients, I think that most business-savvy DJs know how to put their best foot forward. We get our materials ready, arrive punctually if we're meeting away from our own office, and above all, we dress for success. A nice suit or, at the very least, "business casual" attire shows a client that you mean business. After all, you never get a second chance to make a first impression, as they say.

But what about after the contract is signed and the deposit is in hand? How do you handle all of the "first impressions" you'll make at the actual gig? As DJs, we're often just another tuxedo among the many. So how do you make yourself stand out without resorting to stage "trash flash?"

### Say It with Flowers

One tactic I've used over the years is to ask my clients what their bridal party color scheme will be. Over the years I've accumulated a literal stack of different colored vests, ties, and cummerbunds, so I can usually find a good match. Why not? It's a small thing, but you'd be surprised by how many brides take notice!

Two happy coincidences occurred simultaneously one year: my brother-in-law, Eric, got a great job in a florist's shop and I found a box of orphaned lavalier microphone clips. Eric offered to make me some silk boutonnières in various colors for a dollar each. What a deal! I ordered up a bunch, all in various colors. Pop 'em into a lav clip and, voilà!—boutonnières that I can clip to my lapel, week after week, without boring a hole and ruining my jacket, yet I can match or accent my couple's color scheme! The black lavalier clips virtually disappear against the black jacket.

Again, it's a small thing, but in the spirit of Randy Bartlett's "1% Solution," it's a small but memorable improvement that can set you apart.

### What About the Gear?

So there you are, looking dapper and well coordinated, waiting for your guests. But have you really taken stock of what your gear looks like? Take a look around the room. See the elaborate centerpieces, carefully placed flowers, chair covers and ribbons, tooling, balloon arches, and other decorations? Our clients often spend a considerable amount of time and money to "dress up" their banquet room. By comparison, how does your rig look?

Before your next gig, you might want to pay a visit to your local restaurant and party supply store. There you will find fairly inexpensive table skirts and the plastic Velcro clips to attach them to a table. This will come in handy at venues that don't offer skirting. Another cool thing you might want to pick up there are commercial-quality carpeted mats—a great way to cover, hide, and protect your power and speaker cables. Great for high-traffic areas and will cut down your use of expensive stage tape. They're also much less expensive than those "cord tunnels" and a lot easier to carry.

Since I brought it up, you can find cord tunnels of various lengths and sizes at your local electrical supply warehouse. These are best used to manage, hide, and protect power and speaker cables when they must be run in very high traffic areas for an extended period of time. An especially good idea if you're setting up PA that will remain in place for days or weeks at a time.

### Road Case Blues

Mobile entertainers know the benefits of professional road cases for the protection and transport of their equipment, yet that nice, new road case is hard-pressed to blend in with the décor at your average wedding reception. Consoles and amp racks can look utilitarian at best, and "like a stump full o' daddy longlegs" at worst. What is the appearance-conscious DJ to do?

A few years back, I read about one DJ who had his road cases covered in a white material, and I had to admit that the photos of his rig looked very elegant. I also couldn't help wondering just how his stuff STAYED white while going from gig to gig! The upkeep must've been a huge chore!

Instead, I took to the tactic of using a facade. These have two advantages: it hides all those messy cords and road cases while giving you a chance to identify yourself at the same time! (Also known as "shameless self-promotion.") I took my inspiration from the unique music stands that bands use. They're often covered with colorful graphics and emblazoned with the band's name. They may even have amenities like reading lamps and electrical inlets and outlets for easy setup.

With this in mind, my first facade (which I still use today) was made to sit atop a banquet table. It's rectangular, with two hinged panels on each side. Once my console is set up and ready to go, I can slip on the facade like a pair of sunglasses!

It is built like a shadowbox, with a smoked black Plexiglas window in the front, which can be pulled down to reveal my logo, cut from foam core and colored in Day-Glo black light paint. At the top and bottom, hidden by the frame, are two black lights. When turned on, it gives my logo the appearance of a hologram! Much more elegant than a printed table skirt, and I also have the option of turning it off, which leaves the front totally blacked out on the rare occasion where such self-promotion might not be appropriate. Lastly, I put an electrical outlet quad on the back for convenience.

My smaller rig has a vertical configuration and is designed not to require a table. For this job, I called in my custom case builder, Tom, of All-Phase Case Co. in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. From my drawing, he created a facade that initially looks a bit like the monolith from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, but that similarity ends when we open up the two side panels and, once again, slip the façade over the road cases. On the front are two exhaust fans to help keep amps happy and, near the top, a backlit sign. He also provided "mouse holes" on each side for speaker cable runs. This facade comes closest to the music stand concept.



# SPINNIN' YOUNG

## I Can't Stand It No Mo'!

One almost inescapable fact of the DJ life is our use of stands. We use them for lighting, supporting speakers and consoles. One company that has addressed the dressing-up of such stands is DJSkirts.com. They have unique covers for tripods, poles, and trussing that can add a touch of elegance to an often overlooked aspect of a DJ's presentation. The pole cover also hides and manages the cords that dangle from lights or speakers.

## Back That Thing Up

Banquet facilities can run from elegant luxury to downright tacky, with just about everything in between. When I finish my setup, I always walk out to see what my presentation looks like from my audience's point of view. Are there any potential eyesores behind your rig? Are the shake-shingles or commemorative plaques adorning the wall of the V.F.W. distracting? If the answer is yes, then you could use a backdrop!

DJSkirts.com, also offers a nice curtain backdrop to hide those nasty distractions. Or if you prefer something a bit more dynamic, then check out the LED Curtain offered by American DJ. It is peppered with twinkling, multicolored LEDs and even comes with a controller with a sound-active mode. If economy is what you're looking for, most party supply stores have Mylar curtains that can do the job.

## Flavor-Booster

As entertainers, we're unavoidably high profile. We aren't being asked to blend into the woodwork. Dressing for success is all about presentation and perception. World-class chefs put as much thought into how their food looks on the plate as they do in preparing it. It may not taste any better than the next chef's creation, yet on the survey afterward, the customer or judge's perception will be influenced by the presentation. If we want our clients to perceive us as better than the next DJ, then we must pay attention to presentation and dress ourselves — and our gear — for success! **Until next time, safe—and well-presented—spinnin'!** ■



Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ in suburban Detroit. He has also done some radio, commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven.

WORLD-CLASS CHEFS PUT AS MUCH THOUGHT INTO HOW THEIR FOOD LOOKS ON THE PLATE AS THEY DO IN PREPARING IT.



Photo by Janette Chisholm





# BE OUTST

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

**I**t is time to round out your public speaking abilities with five physical and emotional components that, when combined with your vocal abilities and presentation skills, will make you stand out as a truly great speaker.

Let's begin with your personal appearance. Before you open your mouth, before you utter one single word, your audience will form an opinion of you just by looking at you and your appearance. So ask yourself, "When people see me, what am I conveying? Do people see me as professional? Am I getting people's attention through my good personal appearance?" These questions should be easy to answer. Simply dress as you would for your events and look in the mirror. Honestly, what do you see? Is your hair properly groomed? Are you clean-shaven, or if you have a beard or mustache, is it neatly done? Is your tux or suit clean and pressed? Are your shoes polished? (This goes for the ladies, too, except the mustache part of course!) If your answer is yes, then your impression to your audience will be a good one, which is a great start!

As you begin to speak, you do so with confidence! By being confident and composed, your audience will see you as knowledgeable and in control. It will command their respect and help keep their attention on what you have to say. By being confident and poised in your demeanor and speech, your audience becomes less nervous and "antsy." It puts them in a relaxed and receptive mode. They are now more apt to closely listen to your announcements and

**WHEN YOU ARE CONFIDENT AND POISED IN YOUR DEemeanor AND ANTSY. AND SPEECH, YOUR AUDIENCE BECOMES LESS NERVOUS AND**





# STANDING

## AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER

### Part II: Five keys to unlocking your best vocal presentation

directions, following you down any path you choose to lead them. Your audience will pick up your confidence and you will be able to create the desired atmosphere for your client.

ONE CAUTION! There is a fine line between being confident and being pompous and/or obnoxious. Do not come across as a braggart or know-it-all. Do not be condescending to your audience. This will only drive a mental wedge between you and your audience, making for a long and bumpy event.

#### **How can you keep audience attention while you have it? Audience eye contact.**

Look at your audience. Pick out individuals and make eye contact with them. (Of course, this doesn't mean staring at only them!) Speak to them directly. Doing so shows that you are actually interested in them, not just going through the motions of an MC and not merely saying words, but actually conversing and sharing with your audience.

Eye contact also helps in gaining the trust of your audience. It will keep their attention on you and what you are saying because your sincerity will show through. It will enable you to gauge their reactions and see their emotions, then you can use this to make adjustments, and to guide the audience to where you need them to go. Your audience will enjoy the journey you are taking them on and all the more so as you use the next component.

Be personable! Do not simply use the mechanics of public speaking, but allow your personality to shine through. This will bring life, emotion, and realism to your public speaking. Think ahead about what you will be saying and make appropriate adjustments in your vocal qualities and presentation. If the moment is tender and emotional, use the natural warmth

of your voice and facial expressions to convey that feeling. When you want to show excitement, show your enthusiasm vocally, smile, and don't forget to use your hands. Hands? Yes, hands—use gestures! We all naturally use them, but often tend to suppress them when publicly speaking.

Gestures are part of you and your personality. Whether descriptive or emphatic, gestures are an essential part of your public speaking. Descriptive gestures are those that show action or dimension. If you were to say, "Get out!" you would extend your arm and point. While saying "The one that got away was this big!" you would spread your arms wide to show just how big the fish was.

Emphatic gestures are used to visually punctuate a thought. An example might be when you say, "Why not?" as you shrug your shoulders and hold out your hands palms up and spread wide. So use gestures wisely, as they help captivate, show emphasis, and keep focus on you as the speaker or authority.

In being personable, you continue to show sincerity, respect, and care for your audience. Remember, you are not a robot following preset programming. You are a warm, caring, energetic fellow human being, guiding and leading others with your natural emotion and enthusiasm.

The final part of the puzzle is a very simple but often neglected one: preparation. Without good advance preparation, you will lose your focus and your confidence as well. Lack of preparation will not allow you to concentrate or properly impart your message. Lack of preparation will sap you of your natural personality, causing you to be an ineffective MC/public speaker.

So, what do you do? Prepare thoroughly in advance. Have a complete checklist for everything that you will be saying during your

event. Plan out carefully your introductions (practice name pronunciation!), your love story, first dance, dance with parents, etc. Never just wing it! Write it down. It is generally best to make a brief outline of the main points and/or what you want to say and then practice speaking as you would at the event. Continue to practice until you feel comfortable with your presentation and how you are using your vocal abilities as discussed in part I of this series.

Of course, you must always plan for the unexpected. These are the little things that invariably pop up at every event. While you never want just "wing it," there will be times when you need to be spontaneous, or a bit off the cuff.

If you are implementing the five physical and emotional aspects of public speaking, along with your presentation and vocal techniques, your spontaneous speaking will come about naturally. Your positive personal appearance will make both you and your audience feel good. Your confidence makes you relaxed because you have prepared well and this extends itself to your audience, putting them in that receptive, accepting mode. Their trust in you to lead is heightened as you make sincere eye contact with them. As you allow your personality to shine through with your natural warmth, enthusiastic speech, and gestures, you will truly command and deserve respect as an outstanding public speaker. Go forth and be confident! ■

*Please send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to [djcoach@mobilebeat.com](mailto:djcoach@mobilebeat.com).*

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# ~~Don't~~ Get Defensive

By Larry Williams

## Use "defensive marketing" to overcome negative perceptions

**T**here are many instances in our everyday lives that find us approaching things from a defensive standpoint. On the roadways, it's often best to drive defensively. This keeps our guard up and allows us to be aware of our surroundings when life and death can be at stake.

In a society that loves sports, it should come as no surprise why so many people relate the importance of defensive skill to the essence of winning. Competition is often measured in successful terms by one's ability to put forth a strong defense.

As Americans, we are taught at a very young age to defend our Constitution, which embodies our national principles and freedoms, against all enemies foreign and domestic.

It's been said that the best offense is a strong defense. This philosophy is as true in business as it is in sports and personal matters. A defensive posture is something we as DJs have become all too familiar with. We often find ourselves as "defenders" of the industry we love.

### Uneven Playing Field

If one were to look at the wedding industry, it would be relatively easy to see the tremendously difficult position we often find ourselves in with regard to sales. The perception of our profession over time has constantly placed us within the difficult position of having to explain and defend our profession on a very regular basis.

But this position of "defensive" sales is not universal throughout the wedding industry. Take for example, a banquet facility. There is one where a tour of the facility by a helpful company representative can often ensure a smooth sales presentation, allowing the location to sell itself. In this case, seeing is believing.

The same is true for photographers. A picture is worth a thousand words. By viewing photograph albums, customers can easily see for themselves the artistic and professional quality of the final product. Once again, a customer can see for themselves the benefits of hiring the person whose product they have previewed.

Other desirable wedding day necessities such as wedding cakes, flowers, jewelry, invitations, and formal attire are all tangible products that can be viewed up close and personal. The great variety of choices that can be viewed, touched, and even tasted offers a tremendous level of comfort to consumers. The point here is



that choice, as it pertains to tangible products and viewable services, is an enormous sales "plus" that is not often enjoyed by the DJ profession.

### Visualize a Winning Performance

Our sales presentations are often based upon a customer's perception of what they have previously come to know about DJ entertainment. The process is easier when this perception is favorable. But oftentimes, consumer perceptions of our profession find us having to take a defensive posture that can only be overcome by education and reassurance.

Without the benefit of word-of-mouth testimonials, firsthand accounts or customer referrals of our services, our best defensive sales mechanism can often be to "paint a mental picture" of the services we offer. If one were to look at the offerings of music and equipment in a tangible sense, the best selling point that can be made is... YOU! You and your ability to present professionalism, ethical standards, and sound business practices may very well be the best defense that can be mounted against any perception that is less than favorable.

"Sales analogies" can often be used to help paint that mental picture. A sales analogy is a point of logical inference that draws a correlation between something that exists and something the client can relate to. For example, the perceived norm of average service versus the greater experience level required for upscale offerings can be presented as the difference between fast food and fine dining; or flying first class versus coach seating. Painting that mental picture by way of an analogy is the closest a DJ can come to the facility representative who walks a potential bride over to that big picturesque

window overlooking the ocean. Success in defensive sales hinges on your ability to paint a vivid picture of how your services are essential to bringing an event to its full potential.

### Sales Strength Training

It shouldn't come as any surprise that DJs have a more difficult job in sales than do most members of the wedding industry. The reason is twofold. We don't have a tangible product that can be easily seen, touched, or tasted by our customers; and the starting point for many consumers is unfavorable and often ill-informed.

One shouldn't think of defensive marketing as necessarily being a bad thing. Obviously, it would be far easier if we were to always be in a position to begin each sales presentation from a favorable starting point. But since this is not always possible, we can look at defensive marketing as a sales tool combining education and encouragement, which allows us to "paint a mental picture" so our customers will see the full benefit of our experience and expertise.

So the next time you book that client you were hoping for, give yourself a pat on the back. You should take great pride in knowing that the sales process you just engaged in was likely far more difficult than that of other vendors. Your defensive marketing position again took the ball over the goal line for the winning score. Congratulations! ■

*Larry Williams is the author of Mind Your Own Business (ProDJ Publishing). He is also a nationally recognized seminar speaker and serves as a chapter director for the American Disc Jockey Association. In 2006 he was awarded the ADJA's Michael Butler Humanitarian Award. For more info visit [www.djlarrywilliams.com](http://www.djlarrywilliams.com).*





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## All in One Is



By Steve Sharp

## The Prodigy FX from B-52: a seamless blend of players and mixer

**T**echnology keeps pushing forward in multiple directions, sometimes all at once, it seems. B-52 Professional, known primarily for a wide range of speakers, including their Matrix series of powered speakers, have released an unexpected surprise in the form of an integrated dual CD deck and mixer workstation, the Prodigy FX. While it is an integrated “plug and play” workstation, do not compare it to other basic CD-mixer combo units. Although the Prodigy FX is meant to configure easily, it is also meant to offer performance far beyond basic playback. This is for DJs who want to manipulate and really work “hands on” with their music. If that’s you, read on...

### Meet the Prodigy

The Prodigy FX is hefty, and looks built to last. At first inspection, it’s clear that lots of thought was put into creating this piece. The unit can be used on a tabletop or from within the custom flight case that is included, so you’ll have zero accessories to buy. While it’s big in size, it’s not so big or heavy that you’ll need several friends to help you schlep it around. The entire unit is fan cooled and the case designed to support the airflow of the automatic and variable speed

cooling fans. Heat kills electronics faster than any other single thing. The harder you work the Prodigy FX, the harder the fans work to keep the unit cool and fully functional. The mixer section uses VCA components, which are known for their durability and accuracy. Indeed, all the controls have a high-quality “feel.”

The unit configures easily. I had it out of its double boxes and “live” into powered speakers in less than ten minutes. As a quick test, I turned the unit off and on with the power to the speakers still live and loud, and there was no pop at all, at any time. Nice. Basic operation is totally intuitive with the well-laid-out control panel. CD decks and their controls are located to the left and right symmetrically, with the mixer in the middle, so anyone who has DJed previously should be able to work with the Prodigy FX right away.

The CD decks are slot-loading from the front, so there are no trays or door mechanisms to break. There’s even a “forced” reset, which will eject the disc and reset one side of the unit, in the unlikely event a CD jams inside of it during a performance. For longer laser life, the decks go to sleep if left idle for too long (but you can disable or change the parameters of this protection). The decks can play audio CDs, as well as MP3 CDs natively; you don’t have to upgrade it to make it MP3 capable and it is as feature-rich with an MP3 CD as it is with a standard audio disc. Oversampling and shock memory are included, of course.

### Control Yourself

Above the slots is the jog wheel, which is a 5” replica of a standard 12” turntable “wheel of steel.” Behind the wheel are the Digital Signal Processing (DSP) controls that unleash a host of effect options, allowing tons of creativity in live performance; I found these to have a level of quality and accuracy I’ve never seen before in an “all-in-one” unit. They’re laid out logically; you’ll

only have to read the manual for the nuances of operation—the basic operations are totally intuitive. The effects can be stacked on top of each other, up to four (one per “row”), and can be beat-synchronized!

Three programmable hot starts are on each player, as well. Behind it all is the large, well-designed display, which reads well in low light or bright sunlight, from a wide viewing angle, with adjustable brightness (I found I could generally read the Prodigy FX display better than the screen on the notebook computer that I’m using to write this, especially in direct sunlight). The entire deck control area looks very modern (like an iPod or maybe a Zune LCD display), which shows CD text on standard CDs, or tag information on MP3 discs, so you know what you’ve got loaded in your player at all times. Track number (or folder and track number, on MP3 discs encoded that way), time (selectable to elapsed or remaining), pitch (including pitch lock), and BPM (automatically calculated, or manual “tap”—your choice), are all shown here, too. BPM calculates and recalculates in “auto” mode, and if you alter the pitch (or tempo) in either direction, the BPM adjusts accordingly, so the current BPM is always displayed.

Finally, an oval with a slice missing, representing a “needle drop” position, graces the center, reacting to movement of the jog wheel, to help you quickly find (without headphones, even), the start point from where you might “juggle” a beat or sound, in the same way a vinyl turntablist might put correction tape on a record, to find his “marks.” In regular mode, the top and sides of the wheel simply slow down or speed up playback with your touch. In either of the two scratch modes, the top of the wheel scratches, while the sides still speed up or slow down the audio. The two scratch modes are: “blue” LED indicating standard, where the “needle” sticks to wherever you manually direct it to be, while the



# for All



“red” LED mode indicates that when you touch the wheel, you go back to the last cue point, and scratch from there. I believe this feature was first seen on the Pioneer CDJ 800, and makes complex and fast “juggling” simple to execute. Getting really good at it? That’s up to you.

To the right of this all is the pitch adjustment slider, which can be set to 4, 8, 16, or 100%. Additionally, there a button to activate and deactivate the pitch, pitch bend buttons, and a master tempo button. The audio is very good, even when pitch or tempo is altered, within reason.

Loops can be set on the fly with ease, played and later relooped at will, and edited to absolute perfection. Start and end points can be saved

to the internal memory. If you save cue or loop points, the next time you load the same CD, the Prodigy FX will remember them. You can store up to 1,500 of them per CD player.

### Sound Routing

The mixer section has four channels, and up to three mics inputs, the primary two featuring adjustable talkover as well as DSP reverb, so you can perform effects on your vocals while you do strange and wonderful things to your music mix. The four mixer channels each have 3-band equalization and kill switches in each band, as well as a master trim controls, allowing the DJ to compensate for extra-loud or extra-soft sources. If the onboard DSP effects on the decks simply

aren’t enough for you, each channel has an effects loop, so you can use an outboard effect units, too. It’s as simple as the push of a button. The first two channels carry signals for the built-in CD decks, but can also be selected for other line-in audio sources. The decks themselves have line-out jacks as well. If you combine these ins and outs, the DJ is enabled to loop timecode CD audio into (for example) a Serato box, and back through the mixer section of the Prodigy FX, allowing this workstation to control (for example) Rane’s Serato Scratch Live, M-Audio’s Torq, or Virtual DJ software. (One word of caution here: do not use the DSP effects on the CD decks when using timecode discs. The effects will only make the programs “hear” distorted timecode, which could cause all kinds of odd behavior in the programs.)

Both CD decks also offer direct digital outputs, so they can be used for studio or other applications requiring a direct digital output. Channels 3 and 4 are offer selectable line or turntable inputs, and channel 3 also has a dedicated stereo mini jack input, marked “MP3.” If you wanted to use an iPod for dinner music, and later, cut things up on the decks, it’s pretty easy to do, and the iPod can sit out of sight, right in the back of the case.

The crossfader is switchable and selectable (and user-replaceable—another pro feature not often seen on your typical “combo” unit), and the fader curve is adjustable. If you scratch better with one hand versus another, there’s a hamster switch to “flip” sides. In addition to the main balanced XLR output, there’s a separate booth output and volume control, as well as two other sets of RCA outs. The headphone cueing section can be “split” left and right, and/or have the main output mixed into the headphone output.

Wow. I can’t think of a single feature this mixer lacks all the way down to the “mono” switch. As small of a thing as having a “mono” switch is, I’ve seen even high end mixers that lack





this basic ability. In the unlikely event you lose an entire mixer channel, you can use "mono" and the remaining "good" side of the board to finish your event; or if you're doing a job that's really small with only one powered speaker, hit the "mono" switch, and you're good to go.

### Prodigy in Action

In the "lab" (okay, it's my garage), the Prodigy FX got high marks for excellent design, ease of layout, and overall quality. What about "in the field"?

I was called to assist with a Sweet Sixteen party a friend of mine had booked. I decided this was the perfect time to "road test" the Prodigy FX. I set the flight case on an x-stand, tapped into my friend's board, and was ready to go. With three hours of dancing to prepare for, I assembled and burned two identical MP3 CDs and played off those (6 hours of material on each). With the exception of any requests that I didn't have the foresight to burn, which I played from Virtual DJ directly (no timecode, this time) my entire night was played from two identical CDs, one in each deck. I ran loops, echos, flanges, pans (left and right to the beat), and mixed, scratched, and looped throughout the night. The audience loved it! And it was a blast for me, too!

### Mixed Messages

For one final set of tests (and a second and third opinion), I invited over a couple of DJs I know locally who are big on beat-mixing, and for being particular about their gear. One was a fan of the American Audio Pro Scratch 2 CD decks, until he switched to the Numark CDX, which is his current favorite. Our other DJ friend prefers the Technics SLDZ1200 CD decks. I've watched several times as the two of them have "debated" each other over which one of them had a better set of players, so I knew this would be quite an animated discussion and mix session. The hardest thing to do here was separate their observations regarding "preferences" versus "functionality." They both found (as I did) the Prodigy FX to be feature-rich, but (for example) they had difficulty gaining accurate control of the "scratch" features, mainly because of the size of the wheel, and the entire console being "too cramped" compared with what they're used to; as an all-in-one it can't be separated to suit their spacing preferences. They liked it, but (of course) not quite as much as what they're already using.

### Winning Combination

In terms of engineering and layout, the Prodigy FX is fantastic. It's both "retro" (with the elements of turntablism) and futuristic, built with the look, functionality, native feature set, ability to interface with outboard effects and timecode DJ programs, and even basic playback of MP3 players that DJs increasingly need. It is a combination unit of the highest order, featuring high quality and ease of use. The price, while not small, is a great value, compared to what you'd pay in money and time, buying and assembling all the individual items of this caliber, as well as the flight case to carry them in. The Prodigy FX is smart...and did I mention it's also fun? ■

## Prodigy FX Specs

### CD/MP3 PLAYER FEATURES

- » Plays all formats of CD, CDRW and MP3 files with full functionality
- » Dual mode high-resolution touch-sensitive jog wheel
- » Seamless loop with on-the-fly access to loop editing
- » Independent buffer memory antishock for each player
- » Pitch control & master tempo with up to +/- 100% shift range
- » Oversized blue LCD display with wide viewing angle and brightness control
- » True instant start for both CD and MP3 operations
- » Easy MP3 file search by folder, file name, title or artist
- » Onboard DSP effects with multimode scratching, auto and manual filter and phase shifting as well as flanger, echo, trans, pan, & reverse
- » User-friendly beat synchronization for DSP effects
- » Auto BPM or manual TAP tempo
- » Three hot cue points
- » Three independent memory banks can remember up to 1,500 cue points and/or samples
- » Integrated fader start
- » Slot loading transports with blue LED illuminator
- » IPR – Independent Player Reset for each CD/MP3 player provides fail-safe disk jamming protection
- » Built-in memory to save settings (memory is upgradeable)

### VCA MIXER FEATURES

- » 4-channel VCA mixer with flexible input configurations
- » Dedicated DSP reverb and talk-over on MIC channels
- » Dual rail premium quality Accutrack crossfader
- » Effects loop with independent assign button on each channel
- » Hamster switch
- » Rotary crossfader curve control
- » 3-band EQ on each channel with -∞ to +12dB range
- » Kill switches for low, mid and high on each channel
- » Dual mode SPLIT/BLEND headphone monitoring
- » 10 segment tricolored LED metering on inputs and outputs
- » Master MONO switch
- » CD direct outputs and mixer inputs for use with Serato Scratch LIVE, M-Audio Torq, and all other time coded systems

### CONNECTIONS

- » 4 Line, 2 Phono, 1 MP3, and 3 XLR / 1/4" MIC inputs
- » Balanced master XLR outputs plus booth, master, record, & master digital RCA outputs
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## Ace's High

**Acesonic Corporation**, a leading manufacturer of karaoke products, announced the release of the new **DGX-400**, an all-in-one, ultimate player that features a 400-disc changer. The DGX-400 plays all of today's top karaoke formats including CD, CD+G, VCD, DVD, CD-R, CD-RW, DVD+R, and Dual Layer DVD.

The DGX-400 supports connectivity of USB storage devices such as iPods and other MP3 players, flash drives, and external hard drives, and has a built-in memory card reader to support play of MP3, WMA, AVI, MP4, DAT, MPG, and even JPEG, files, allowing users to play a variety of formats without the hassle of switching machines.

The DGX-400 offers an extensive selection of direct access buttons on the front panel, to allow users to control the functions without using a remote. This player also offers Real-Time Super Error Correction, which automatically skips disc-read errors to prevent freezing during playback.

This function works even if the discs are dirty, scratched or have minor cracks.

Other convenient features include: 14-step key controller; echo controller; PC keyboard input



for easy text entry; two 1/4" microphone inputs; a built-in karaoke mixer for karaoke or voice narration; a built-in microphone bass and treble controller; and a disc library function that can organize discs by genre and library. With libraries

of karaoke CDs, DVD movies, shows and concerts, music CDs, and image CDs growing rapidly, the new changer is the perfect way to get organized.  
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# The Numark

## A NEW DIRECTION

By Stu Chisholm

**W**hen a new technology emerges, several milestones are passed. Standards are set and reset, and, when that technology is either well established or passes into history, we can point to certain defining moments.

I remember being at a place called World Camera & Sound in Ferndale, Michigan, back in the '70s when two such exciting milestones were first unveiled: the Sony U-Matic videocassette recorder and the Technics 1200 turntable. Videophiles recognize the Sony U-Matic as being the very first practical videocassette recorder available to the general public. I stood that day in amazement as I watched Stephen Spielberg's excellent TV movie (and directorial debut) *Duel* in crisp, clear

color. There had been VTRs (video tape recorders) previously, but few could record color and even fewer had very good picture resolution. The Sony offered more lines than the average television of the day could deliver. While it never caught on with the public due to its high cost and the large size of the tapes, the U-Matic became the workhorse of television stations everywhere. Meanwhile, over at the Technics display, I kept hearing the words "direct drive" and "torque," two words that you seldom heard used together at the time. To professional DJs, the Technics 1200 became the standard by which all direct-drive turntables are judged.





# D<sup>2</sup> Director

Though I didn't know it at the time, that day signaled a revolution that would change the audiovideo world forever. Now, a brand-new revolution is under way.

There is no doubt that audio history will take note of the arrival of what our industry is beginning to call "digital media controllers." I was delighted to review Cortex HDC-1000 in a recent *Mobile Beat* (March, #106, p. 34) and, since my conversion to hard drive playback, I have been actively watching developments as several manufacturers are ramping up to supply the demand for these computerless, file-based music and video playback devices. Imagine my reaction when *Mobile Beat* informed me that Numark was shipping me their brand new D<sup>2</sup> Director (pronounced "Dee-Squared") for review...Giddy barely describes it!

Numark is a company also well known for many firsts. They gave us the first professional dual CD player and the first digital sampling mixers. More recently they introduced the first professional iPod mixing consoles. So, while the D<sup>2</sup> Director will have to settle for second place in the race to store shelves, it is a very close second. I heard the buzz about the D<sup>2</sup> Director first, but the company had delayed its release for various reasons. I was anxious to see how it compared!

## Taking Direction

When the D<sup>2</sup> Director arrived, I noted some distinct differences between it and the Cortex unit, the first one being its size, which is three rack spaces instead of two and sharing some cosmetic features of the rest of the Numark line. (It'll look good in your rack along side their DVD01 dual video deck, for instance.) The biggest difference, though, was the display! A comparatively large LCD screen sits between the two "decks" and is very easy to read. There's even a contrast adjustment, which can come in handy if you're looking at the screen from an angle or working in bright light. And where the screen is easy to read, Numark has included an accessory that makes it easier to manage your files: a keyboard. This is a huge help when searching for songs or artists, and something I had to buy separately for the Cortex. Nice touch!

Looking over the included literature, I was confused at first. "Where's the manual?" All I found were a safety pamphlet and a quick start guide. Puzzled, I checked the box one last time and found it—on a very cool thumb drive included with the unit. The manual is a PDF file and it is well written and illustrated. The drive also has some sample music files to help you get started. (These lead to a mystery which I'll get to in a moment.)

As with the Cortex, the first thing you must do with the D<sup>2</sup> is to check for the latest version

## Numark D<sup>2</sup> Director Update

Just shortly after this review was initially completed, Numark released a firmware update, along with an updated version of the Numark Librarian software. According to their website, it allows "improved handling and decoding of corrupt MP3 files. Most files will now be playable." Thinking that this might be why some songs wouldn't play, I installed the updated firmware and then deleted and re-created the library database on my hard drive. As a test, I first plugged-in the flash drive that came with the unit. This time the included song samples loaded and played without a hitch!

Next, I hooked up my main library hard drive and searched for the songs that the unit didn't find previously. This time, they showed up and loaded without a hitch. Looks like their engineers had been burning the midnight oil!

The most noticeable improvement was the search feature. Track searches had been cut from minutes to seconds. In over a dozen searches, none took more than 30 seconds and most were well under 20. Artist searches were still quite long, however.

This update was a great improvement, and I'm impressed with Numark's quick response. According to their engineers, future releases will further concentrate on speed. At the pace they're working, improvements should be fast and furious! Check the Web site often.

## D<sup>2</sup> Director - Features at a Glance

- ✓ Support for external USB hard drives, thumb drives, and mass storage class music players
- ✓ Included USB keyboard supports searching for songs, artists, and more
- ✓ Large jog wheels for pitch-bend and scratching
- ✓ Seamless looping with stutter-start function
- ✓ Pitch control: +/-6, 12, 25 and -100/+25%
- ✓ Large 5" backlit screen with easy-to-use interface and brightness adjustment
- ✓ Track Profile Visualization to see current track position and track events
- ✓ 3 USB ports
- ✓ File formats supported: MP3, WAV, and AAC (non-DRM protected)
- ✓ Drive Formats supported: FAT, NTFS (read-only), and HFS+
- ✓ Beatkeeper technology with TAP override function
- ✓ Fader Start
- ✓ Onboard Playlist creation and support for computer-generated playlists
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[www.numark.com](http://www.numark.com)





of the unit's firmware, located on the Numark website. On your home PC, download it to the thumb drive, eject, and then plug the drive into the USB port on the D<sup>2</sup> Director. When you press and hold the on button, the D<sup>2</sup> will recognize the update and, with a click, you're completely up to date! Future updates are meant to prevent your D<sup>2</sup> from becoming obsolete for years to come, as well as provide bug fixes and expanded functionality.

Next, you'll need your music library, which can be on an iPod, external hard drive, or even a flash drive converted to MP3, AAC or WAV format. While you can instantly play back your music using the file browse view, you must first prepare your drive by building a library database to enjoy the many powerful search features the D<sup>2</sup> can perform. The unit can do this but, if you have a large library, it can take a very long time. I found the best way is to use the power of your desktop or laptop computer.



Photo by Janette Chisholm

Again, go to the Numark website and download the "librarian" tool. It is easy to download and install. Since I have two copies of my music library on two separate drives, and because it is *very* large, I decided to do an experiment. I let the D<sup>2</sup> Director build the library on one drive while my home studio computer built the library on the other. It was no contest: the computer was finished in about four hours. The D<sup>2</sup> was still working about 24 hours later. Yes — the next day! Either way, this can be a BIG job if you have a sizeable music collection, so you'll want to do this well ahead of your event.

At this point I must also comment on the database itself. If you're a Cortex user, you know that the ".db" file also takes a while to build, but is very small. (Mine is 209 MB) When you add new music, updates are very fast. The Numark ".library" file, by comparison, is a HUGE beast! (Over 1 GB!) Updates aren't nearly as fast either, but are done in less than an hour as the system only notes the changes. (Another thing Cortex users will want to know: the databases are NOT compatible! You'll need both files if you plan to use your hard drives with both units.)

### Bench Test: The Mystery of the Music Balk

After all of this preparation, I was anxious to fire-up the D<sup>2</sup> and put it through its paces. Hooked directly into my home studio, I grabbed the first music source at hand: the Numark thumb drive that came with the unit. There were only a handful of songs (and a couple I added myself) so I skipped building the library database. File view showed the entire contents on the main screen. Normally, you would use the control knob on the face of the unit (or the up and down arrows on the keyboard) to highlight the track you want to play, and then press the button marked "Send to A" or "Send to B," which is supposed to load the track to one of the

two decks. I say "normally" because when I did this, the track name appeared in the deck, but the song didn't load. No progress bar, no little "wait" symbol, no timer. No music. Scratching my head, thinking maybe the file might be corrupted, I tried the next, and the next. Still no music! I began to think that my neighbors would get worried because of the lack of noise from my place, when I clicked on one of the tracks that I loaded myself. In a flash, the track loaded into the unit and the time information appeared at the top. This activated the big, blue "play" button: music at last!

Examining the files on my PC, I couldn't see any reason why the others wouldn't play. They were regular MP3s ripped at a modest bit rate. There were no types of protections on them that I could see, and they played readily using Windows Media Player. As a reality check, I also loaded one into Adobe Audition, which won't edit copy-guarded material. It loaded without hesitation. To get to the bottom of this mystery, it was time for a tech support call!

Through the Numark website, I hooked up with support technician and resident D<sup>2</sup> expert, Matthew. He very patiently explained every detail of the unit at length. I was very surprised by the amount of time he spent with me. We hooked up my main music library drive and it appeared that I could load and play my files at will. Still, even Matthew couldn't explain why the other files wouldn't play. The mystery deepened.

### Show Time

By the Saturday of my scheduled gig, I was pretty confident in my ability to quickly find and load my music using the D<sup>2</sup>, but just in case, I put the D<sup>2</sup> on two spare channels on my regular DJ system's mixer.

In actual use, the D<sup>2</sup> has many features not found in other controllers to date. First and foremost is the "record crate." This idea borrows from how vinyl DJs used to use the top of their crate to pull songs and arrange their order. You can search by tracks, albums, artists, BPM, and a few other criteria and then toss tracks into the record crate. Going over the bride and groom's list, I put their bridal dance and other important requests into the crate ahead of time, making a large part of the evening a point-and-click proposition. Requests could be instantly added as well.

There is also the option of building music lists, either in advance or on the fly. The difference between these lists and the crate is that lists can be stored and even named, while the crate is a temporary utility. You can create a play list days or weeks in advance so you won't miss a single request from your client. Play lists load quickly into the crate in one operation.

For playback, Numark has included a loop and stutter feature, much like the one on their CD decks and every bit as good. The loops are tight and seamless, and the stutter feature is a lot like a loop, which immediately returns you to the point in the song where you started. The large jog wheels are used for pitch bending, searching through a song loaded onto one of the decks, or scratching. The scratch effect is excellent, and while the wheels aren't touch sensitive, their response is very fast! Numark has also included their famous "Beatkeeper" technology, with a small display that tells you when beats are perfectly matched for spot-on beat

mixing.

There were some problems. For all of the prep time and bulk of the librarian file, searches were extremely slow. There's nothing like watching your song in one deck run out while the little clock symbol tells you a search is still in progress. Luckily, I kept some music at the ready on my regular system, so my party didn't suffer.

There is also a bit of latency (delay) when looking for info. For instance, a search for "Let's Get Married" produced several results. To find Jagged Edge instead of the Proclaimers, and find the remix, I had to highlight each item on the list and press the "info" button. Problem #1: The buttons are multi-function, and on this screen the info button is on the next "page." That means hitting an arrow key to access it. Very inconvenient. Problem #2: Sometimes it takes several seconds to show this info. Instead, you're looking at the info for the last track loaded. If you're not paying close attention, it can throw you.

### Return of the Music Balk Mystery

When a search for "Sexyback" produced no results, I knew something was not right. Going to file view, I located the volume it was on and sent the track to the record crate. When it came time to cue, I pushed the "Send to A" button. The track name appeared in the deck but wouldn't load, just like the sample tracks on the thumb drive. When a request for "Buttons" did the same thing, it dawned on me that both tracks were ripped from service discs I subscribe to. They have their own folder within my music files folder. For some reason, a lot of them are "invisible" to the D<sup>2</sup>! (A bigger mystery is why some are not!) My regular system again saved the day, and as this article was completed, the Mystery of the Music Balk remained unsolved.

### Standing Firm

There are many reasons why DJs prefer not to use computers for their shows, and products like the D<sup>2</sup> Director are a response to this need. Yet in their dark, electronic hearts lie processors—tiny computers—that run on code called "firmware." (Like software, only for dedicated devices.) This firmware is all-important. When I did my review on the Cortex, there were several problems with keyboard functionality and search among others, yet their software engineers produced an update that cured just about all of them seemingly overnight! To be a successful contender, searches on the D<sup>2</sup> will have to become faster, as must updating the search files, and all music files must be recognized and playable.

Considering the thought and quality that Numark has obviously poured into the D<sup>2</sup> Director, I'm certain that a future firmware update will address these issues and even add some features. A few minutes with the D<sup>2</sup> will tell you: these guys are serious. Whether this is another U-Matic moment, only history will decide. Yet I have a feeling that it is about to become a big part of my personal history, and at such a modest price, may well become a part of yours! The revolution continues. ■

*A SPECIAL THANKS to Matthew and the team at Numark, my wife, Janette, for her photographs, time, and patience, Monty Boleyn of New Concepts Software for his help with "all things computer", and Kent & Rebecca Jenkins for allowing my little test on their big day.*





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# Hey DJ, How About Some new mu

You may not need to ride the cutting edge, but ignorance of the latest music trends can still hurt you

By Steve Sharp

**M**uch is made of what's more or most important to DJs. Is it talent, gear, personality, music, etc.? While the order of importance is debatable, the answer is: they're all important! But of course it's good to focus on each individually.

#### A Need for the New

Welcome to the debut of a column with a focus on new music. We'll be looking at specific songs, as well as overall trends in music. And unlike other sources, the slant is with the mobile DJ in mind. The songs reviewed may be the very latest releases, or they may be tracks that have been out for a while, but are showing promise "in the field."

I've seen DJs who are VERY savvy to the latest music, and could create beatmixes that would amaze—to the point that they're musically "too hip for the room"—while being genuinely scared of using a microphone. Conversely, I've seen really good mobile DJs who are fantastic with interaction (for example) but utterly clueless about beatmixing, or music newer than over a year ago. Each of these extremes could improve—indeed we all can!

Some invest little to no time or money in being aware of current music, and actually believe it's not important. Well, regardless of your age, or whether you like "today's music" or not, part of your job is be ready for the room, in all ways. Musically, the room should never be "hipper" than you. The goal here is to open your eyes, mind, and yes, ears to what's going on. How you apply it depends on how you read the crowd.

#### Lost Liner Notes...Found!

Umm...liner notes, shrink wrap, and the smell of new records...or am I just old?

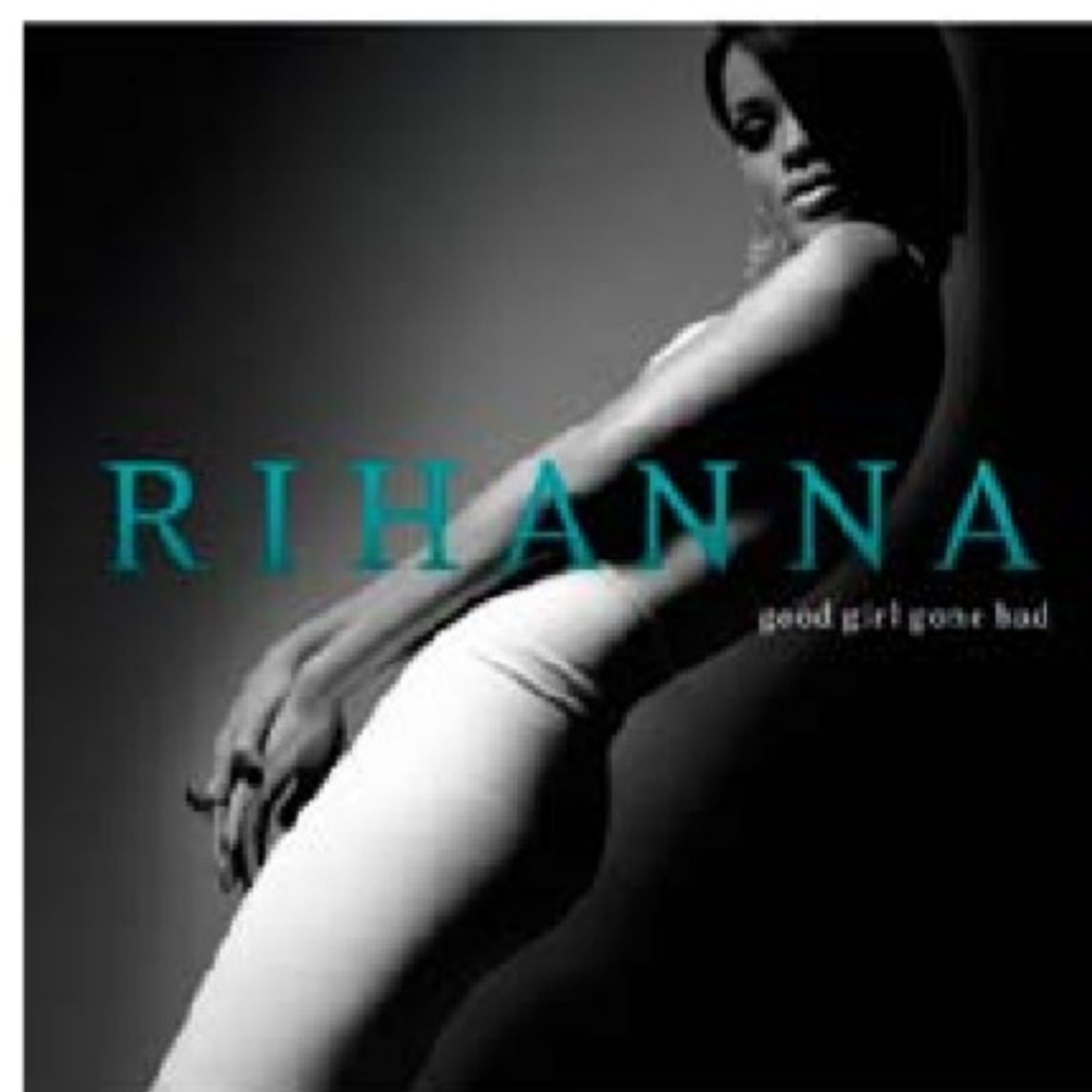
In those ancient days when the vinyl LP was THE carrier of music for the masses and not just a speciality item for a fanatical few, you would go to the store, physically pick up a 12" x 12" shrink-wrapped album, and take it home to listen to, because you couldn't get the immediate gratification of playing it immediately in your car. You'd "pop" the shrink wrap, and the magic began. The smell of new vinyl (a smell only rivaled

by the legitimate "new car" smell) wafted out of the packing. You'd drop the needle on side A and read the liner notes, sprawled on your bed, while you listened to this magical black disc for the first time.

Lots of care was invested in album covers and liner notes that would accompany the music. They would include all the credits (including guest appearances), "thank yous" from the artist, sometimes the song lyrics, pictures, artwork related to the album, and other "goodies" that, while subtle, would enhance the experience you'd have with the artist. There were no videos, so between you, your ears, and the album's other materials, YOU decided what visual identity went with the music. CDs, music video, and later, digital downloads, indeed the Internet itself have changed—and then changed again—the music buying and listening experience. Some things have been enhanced, while others have been obscured, never to be the same again. Example: album covers (12" x 12") were considered a "pop" art form. When CDs became the dominant musical carrier, the quality and importance of album covers shrank, because the size of the canvas itself shrank. And I don't know if it's because I got older and busier that I no longer religiously read the liner notes, or that the whole thing just seems so small crammed into a 5" CD booklet. Maybe my eyesight is going. Either way, that connection has been lost.

Add to it that I began going to services for my musical needs. What a great thing! Promo Only, ERG, RPM, TMCentury (now JonesTM), or even iTunes. I've at least checked them all out along the way, and subscribed to several of them. They're fantastic, but they have NO liner notes at all; so while I have convenience like never before, I know LESS than ever about the artists. The closest thing to having liner notes comes from Promo Only, who have a monthly magazine that will sometimes shed light on things like who's in the band, who produced the song, etc.

One of my goals for this column is to be able to replace the "liner notes." Songs and artists have stories...if only we knew more of them! Besides boosting our personal enjoyment, knowing the stories can help us as we try to connect with our audiences. I think the lost art of liner notes gave a greater sense of connection to the music, a connection we are missing far too often with the ways in which we get our music in 2007.





# Music?

## The Time of the Season...

As spring proms morph into early summer weddings, the time is always right for new music... And yes, I have some! Here are some songs of note:

### "MAKES ME WONDER" - MAROON 5

Adam Levine and crew have completed the long-awaited follow-up to their breakthrough 2002 set, *Songs About Jane*. It doesn't seem like five years, partially because *Songs About Jane* didn't "critical mass" with the general public until almost two years later. This release continues with the rhythmic pop that made the band connect with a large fan base in the first place. "Makes Me Wonder" is another heartbreak song, cleverly disguised by happy music, this time reminiscent of the Earth, Wind & Fire rhythm section. And be sure to get your hands on the clean version. On the album, it's not. I expect this song to perform very well, and to age well, since the lyrical hook of the song isn't battered into your head. Instead, it's a little more clever. Indeed, the reason I like Maroon 5 in the first place is that while they're unabashedly "pop," they are, overall, just a little more clever.

### "WHAT I'VE DONE" - LINKIN PARK

Speaking of long-awaited, Linkin Park is back with a new single, from their long-awaited *Minutes to Midnight* disc. LP is a group of very talented individuals, who together are better than the sum of their individual parts. While this song isn't bad and is climbing the charts, it's missing some signature elements we've come to expect from this band. I'm told they are "progressing" out of the rap-rock hybrid that they helped create and define, which is fine. But on this well-written single, all the vocals are from Chester Bennington. Where is Mike Shinoda? To me, this would be like having a new single from the Ying Yang Twins, and there was only one of the twins actually on it (and no, they're not actually named Ying and Yang). Or, if you can't relate to that analogy, try this one: if it's Mick Jagger singing, but Keith Richards isn't playing guitar on it, is it the Rolling Stones? I'm all for expanding the scope of what you do as a band, especially one as talented as Linkin Park, but this single doesn't hit me as hard as I thought it would, at least on initial impression.

### "UMBRELLA" - RIHANNA WITH JAY-Z

I find it a shame that Jay-Z sounds better as a guest on this track than anything I've heard from his own "comeback" album. I've also been

pleasantly surprised at how well Rihanna has done in her career, thus far. And most of her hits have all sounded unique, too, which bodes well for her career. "Umbrella" is considerably funkier than the "Tainted Love" of her previous hit *S.O.S. (Rescue Me)*, with hard-hitting, live (sounding, at least) drums, and sinewy synths more often used as "blips" in hip-hop songs, versus for melody, as they're used here. After Jay's strong starting, Rihanna's vocals stand up to the strong track that's almost rock and roll with R&B singing; it's R&B with a staccato rock and roll attitude. It's original and very strong.

### "GIRLFRIEND" - AVRIL LAVIGNE

Avril Lavigne rebounds from a more deliberately adult-sounding 2nd album with the lead off single from her 3rd album, which harkens back to the bubblegum punk (is there such a thing?) of her hit "Sk8er Boi" from her first album. It's even MORE catchy than that, with a cheerleader-sounding hook, which is quite the winning formula right now ("Hollaback Girl," anyone?). This single follows up the surprisingly big success of "Keep Holding On," from the movie *Eragon*. If you've got middle school-aged girls, play this, and do it soon—it's hip now, but will be pass ten minutes from now.

### "CANDYMAN" - CHRISTINA AGUILERA

This song expands upon Christina's latest look (that of a stylish 1940s diva) into greater consideration with a very Andrew Sisters-like song that I'm sure you could swing dance to. The part that seems to have bothered some are the too-risqu nature of some of the lyrics, which would seem to be in stark contrast to the wholesome throwback of the song itself. Get the clean version. You have been warned.

### "HOME" - DAUGHTRY

Even better and with more mass appeal than the chart-topping "It's Not Over," this song has also reached hit status. Sonically, it's somewhere between an '80s power ballad and contemporary country (throw in some steel guitars, and they could have a country mix)... maybe a little like Creed, too. Lyrically, it's a time-honored tribute to the comforts of... yes, "Home." And I didn't even mention *American Idol*. I can picture photo montages being set to this song already.

That's it for now. For up-to-the-minute reviews, check out our "New Music Tuesday" column, with exclusive online content, fresh every Tuesday at [MobileBeat.com](http://MobileBeat.com). ■

## NEW MUSIC TUESDAY

Get more of Steve's fresh, crisp reviews of the latest releases, every Tuesday at [www.mobilebeat.com](http://www.mobilebeat.com). This column features exclusive online content not found in the pages of *Mobile Beat*. You can benefit from Steve's observations of brand new music—BEFORE it has an impact on your dancefloors. Check it!



The lost art of liner notes gave a greater sense of connection to the music.



# Music, Moguls and Our Times

Part 2 of an incisive look at the modern phenomenon of Corporate Music

The DJ industry has suffered losses from CORPORATE MUSIC programming streamed into clubs, and by the public's loss of interest in music due to homogenous radio.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the management of Mobile Beat Magazine and/or ProDJ Publishing.

By Fred Sebastian

**D**isgracefully, the U.S. media monopolies don't tell us that more people die in America from inability to pay for diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of health problems—preventable deaths—than they do from murders. In 2002, the FBI published that there were twenty-two hundred murders in the United States; for that same period, nonprofits calculated an estimated 12,000 deaths from lack of health care. Obviously we don't get this picture from our evening news. Instead, we are bombarded with shocking examples (though rare by comparison) of why we should be vigilant and fear our neighbors. This is the very danger in how Clear Channel and the media monopolies abuse their power and do harm to all of us, regardless of political preference. For these mega-companies it's about control, more power, markets, controlling resources, and profit.

## Mega-Media and Politics...Again

In March 2007, Clear Channel postponed a vote by its shareholders to April 19, 2007, in an effort to drum up more support to sell nearly 450 of its 1,200 radio stations (none in major markets) to the investment companies Bain Capital and Thomas H. Lee Partners, its partisan friends. This would, in effect, make 450 stations private and not even accountable to shareholders. The upside is that those stations could conceivably be sold to more diverse private owners, a great prospect, though I won't hold my breath for that. Both companies have ties and partnerships with the Carlyle Group, (previously mentioned Bush employers),

and all three are named in an antitrust class action lawsuit alleging that among a group of 13 companies, that have come to be known as the "Equity Club" by the press, they colluded in a price-fixing conspiracy to underpay on the purchase of companies by agreeing not to bid against each other. The businesses short-changed by their collusion, including those that are not suing, could easily be valued in excess of \$100 billion. Virtually all "Equity Club" companies charged in the suit have strong Republican ties, but of course they don't hesitate to finance Democrats to also do their bidding. How strong are the Republican ties? The founder of Bain Capital is Mitt Romney, who some believe is the current frontrunner to be the Republican presidential nominee, potentially the next president of the United States in 2008. If this purchase is allowed by shareholders, Romney will have one more piece of his media empire in his pocket, much like George W. has. Is that what "open airwaves" in the public interest should look like? It's also worth noting that Clear Channel's like-minded friends at Bain Capital and Thomas Lee Partners also own Warner Music.

## Power to the People...If They Take It

Some will say, "So what?! It's America and we're a free country. People have the right to pursue their beliefs—and profits." To them, I would answer in the company of the authors of the Constitution and numerous presidents since then who warned of the dangers of excess power, with the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower: "In the councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence...The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will exist." (Perhaps Eisenhower himself, the principled Republican that he was, would have taken action to impeach a president and an administration so brazenly and blatantly serving themselves and corporate interests instead of those of the citizenry.)

Fortunately for all of us, there are many small armies of citizens, nonprofit groups, and

non-governmental organizations out there trying to protect us from power abusers and conglomerates that would taint the truth, distort the reality, filter the music, and control the world, and I encourage you to check them out to learn more, share what you learn with others, and support those that are worthy. I've listed some major players at right.

If you're reading these pages, music is probably a major part of your life, for your livelihood, and simply for the joy and escape DJs provide from the difficulties of our world. The DJ industry has already suffered losses from corporate music programming streamed into clubs, and by the public's loss of interest in music due to homogenous radio. We'll lose more if these corporate powerhouses are allowed to take further control of the Internet. So, the real road to progress is in your hands, too. Call your congressperson and senators. The question is, will future progress be made for you and all people that benefit from open, diverse airwaves (as is the law)...or will yet another one of our freedoms be sold to and hoarded by the powerful, the corporate few. Don't think the Internet is safe for independent music artists and diversity, or even news, because as I write this, media powers and communications conglomerates are working full-time to control all content on the Internet by trying to force government to enact laws that will abolish the existing "net neutrality." Net neutrality is the present ability of all people to have equal access and presence on the World Wide Web, regardless of purpose or economic status. Perhaps that's a subject for a future Music Views piece, though much has already been written on this also, and can be found in the resources list that follows.

The bottom line is, a society that only gets some of the news, some of the facts, some of the music, and some of the ability to compete is not a free society. Along with millions of other truly patriotic Americans, we must all say "No more!" It's up to all of us to BE the change we want to see in the world.



If there is a new artist like Bob Dylan out there somewhere today, perhaps he or she has already penned an next-generation update to his great song and named it "The Times They NEED A-Changing." Such songs we all desperately need to hear.

Enjoy! ...and stay tuned. ■

Fred Sebastian is an independent various-artist CD distributor with AVC Sebastian, serving the DJ industry for over 15 years. For a catalog of CDs visit [www.HitMusicb2b.com](http://www.HitMusicb2b.com), email [buyit@hitmusicb2b.com](mailto:buyit@hitmusicb2b.com) or call A.V.C. Sebastian at 973-731-5290.

## RESOURCES FOR RECLAIMING MUSIC & MEDIA

### Fair

[www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)  
(a top force in media reform)

### Open Airwaves

[www.openairwaves.org](http://www.openairwaves.org)  
(part of Center For Public Integrity, a powerhouse for government accountability)

### Americans for Radio Diversity

[www.radiodiversity.com](http://www.radiodiversity.com)

### Reclaim The Media

[www.reclaimthemedias.org](http://www.reclaimthemedias.org)  
(Leading advocate and Resources)

### Media Access Project

[www.mediaaccess.org](http://www.mediaaccess.org)  
(Legal group taking it to court - great resources. Includes article entitled "How Independent Artists could lose their Independent Internet.")

### Media Alliance

[www.mediaalliance.org](http://www.mediaalliance.org)

### Take Back The Media

[www.takebackthemedias.com](http://www.takebackthemedias.com)  
(features Clear Channel database, great links directory, and link to database on "Who Owns What" stations in your area).

### Media Reform

[www.mediareform.net](http://www.mediareform.net)

### Free Press

[www.freepress.net](http://www.freepress.net)  
(An unadulterated voice, news, advocates, more)

View a sample letter to request FCC denial of a broadcast license:

[www.bethemedia.org/2005/11/\\_federal\\_commun.html](http://www.bethemedia.org/2005/11/_federal_commun.html)

## VIDEO DOCUMENTARIES: GRASP THE SITUATION

(Best found on the Internet or through your area Peace groups, or contact me. All released after 2000.)

### The Corporation

(Where Capitalism ceases to be good)

### OutFoxed

(The broad view of the Fox News Empire)

### Orwell Rolls In His Grave

(The Media/Corporate/Gov't transformation as it's happening)

### Iraq For Sale

(Who's making a killing, and who's getting killed)

### Why We Fight

(American soldiers and the military industrial complex)

### Unconstitutional

(The Patriot Act and the price of freedom)

### Thirst

(Corporations monopolizing the world's water supply).

### The Future of Food

(...and what's happening today)

### The Ground Truth

(...from our Iraq soldiers)

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# For the Record, It's a Different Kind of 50th

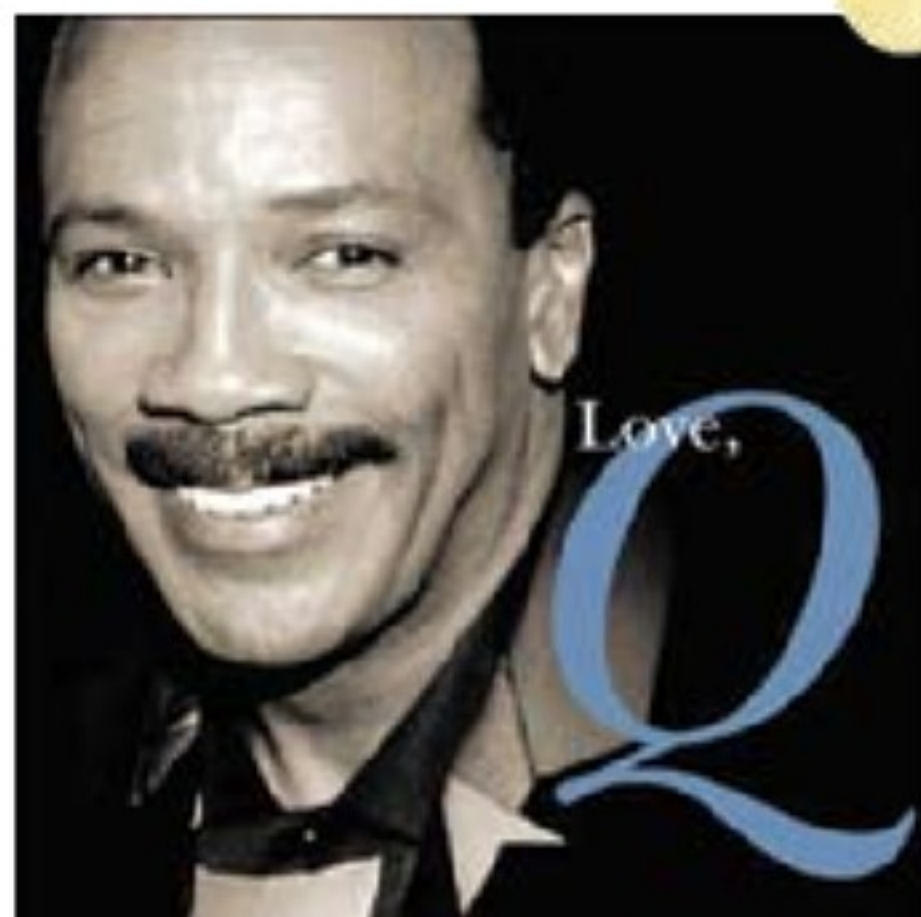
## The Recording Academy® Unveils 50th Annual Grammy® Awards Celebration

**T**he Recording Academy® has announced its plans for a year-long celebration of its milestone 50th Annual GRAMMY® Awards, which will air live on CBS from Los Angeles' STAPLES Center on Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008. Neil Portnow, President of The Recording Academy, was joined by 27-time GRAMMY winner and 50th Celebration Ambassador Mr. Quincy Jones, as well as multi-platinum recording artist and GRAMMY winner Joss Stone at the press event earlier this past spring. Jones, who was one of the founding members of The Recording Academy, and Stone helped unveil the official artwork and announce a slate of activities for music fans and the music industry including the GRAMMY Museum, a retrospective illustrated coffee table book, and the GRAMMY Brand fashion line. Also in attendance were Recording Academy Vice Chairman Jimmy Jam and Los Angeles Chapter Governor Dave Koz, as well as other music industry executives and VIPs.

"For some it's a milestone—but we're just getting started," said Portnow. "Over the past 50 years, the GRAMMY Awards has become the world's most famous music telecast and the highest honor bestowed upon music makers. The GRAMMY Awards continue to push the envelope for never-before-seen live musical performances from new and established artists across all genres while The Recording Academy continues to focus on its mission of recognizing musical excellence, advocating for the well-being of music makers and ensuring music remains an indelible part of our culture."

### Mr. Jones Represents

As part of its 50th Celebration activities, The Recording Academy has named Jones its official ambassador. A member of The Academy for more than 40 years and a member of the GRAMMY Foundation's Board of Directors since 1992, Jones will participate in various hallmark cultural and



educational events spotlighting music and the arts over the next year and a half as The Academy celebrates its remarkable 50-year history with an eye toward the future.

"I am so proud to be one of the founding members of this organization that now represents 18,000 music makers," said Jones. "I am honored to be an ambassador as The Recording Academy celebrates its influential 50-year history with a celebration of events and activities for music fans and music makers, all while keeping the importance of music education and preservation at the forefront of its efforts."

The following are the Recording Academy's celebratory programs and initiatives. For more information about The Academy, please visit [www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com).

### Illustrated Coffee Table Book

To commemorate the past 50 years, an illustrated book, featuring photos from past GRAMMY shows and of memorable GRAMMY moments, will be sold exclusively through Borders Books, beginning in October. The book will have commentary penned by noted Rolling Stone scribe and GRAMMY Awards



show writer David Wild, and will include a foreword by Jones.

#### GRAMMY Brand

GRAMMY Brand, a high-end fashion collection for men and woman that celebrates the intersection between music and fashion, will be available at select boutique retailers this fall. From leather jackets and high-end tees to beaded handbags, jewelry and accessories, everyone will be able to celebrate their connection to music all year long by purchasing a piece of music history. A portion of the proceeds from sales of these products will benefit the GRAMMY Foundation® and MusiCares®.

#### 50th Annual GRAMMY Awards Nominations Announcement

The announcement of nominations for the 50th Annual GRAMMY Awards, which showcases those who The Recording Academy's membership of music professionals believe are the best of the best during the eligibility period (Oct. 1, 2006 – Sept. 30, 2007), will take place in Los Angeles on Thursday, Dec. 6, 2007.

#### Starry Night and the 2008 Person of the Year

The GRAMMY Foundation Leadership Award will be presented to Quincy Jones at Starry Night, an intimate benefit concert and dinner, on Saturday, July 28, 2007. The honor is in recognition of Jones' lifetime commitment and dedication to social, cultural, economic and educational issues spanning the globe.

On Friday, Feb. 8, 2008, MusiCares will honor the incomparable "Queen of Soul" Aretha Franklin as its 2008 Person of the Year. The tribute dinner and all-star concert honors legends in the music business who have made significant contributions to the world of music and have demonstrated extraordinary humanitarian and philanthropic efforts.

#### 50th Annual GRAMMY Awards Telecast

The 50th Annual GRAMMY Awards will be broadcast on the CBS Television Network at 8 PM (ET/PT) on Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008, marking the 35th consecutive year the show will air on CBS. Additionally, the GRAMMY Awards was the first awards show to air in high-definition TV/5.1 surround sound, and will continue utilizing the latest technology to provide a more immersive viewing and listening experience for the show's global audience.

#### GRAMMY Museum

Paying homage to music's rich cultural history, The Recording Academy will build a GRAMMY Museum. The 30,000 square-foot facility will explore and celebrate the enduring legacies of all forms of music, the creative process, the art and technology of the recording process, and the history of the premier recognition of excellence in recorded music. The Museum will be housed in AEG's L.A. Live entertainment complex (across the street from STAPLES Center) and is scheduled to open in September 2008. ■

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# Verbal Abuse

By Raymardo

**S**un., April 01, 2007  
 - Brownstone House,  
 Paterson, NJ: Dear Diary, As I  
 sit with thirty-seven minutes  
 to spare before the start of  
 a wedding in the grand ballroom  
 on the second floor of the elegant  
 Brownstone House (I got to use the  
 elevator), the familiar room spawns  
 memories of events, some comical  
 others serious, that flow through  
 me...like liquified matter through  
 someone who consumed twice the  
 recommended dosage of Ex-Lax...

## The DJ's Weekly Grind

As a veteran of the DJ and mobile entertainment profession for nearly two decades, I've been there, done that, and seen it all. Probably like you, rarely do I hear a story that I can't echo practically verbatim with an experience from my personal diary.

I've spent my years in the DJ field, interviewing the profession's most successful DJs along the way. Still, I regularly hold court with gentlemen and women who have created DJ organizations, software, and associations; top club and mobile entertainers; DJs that have broken into the arena of producer or artist; jocks who have become published authors; and more.

The one common thread among all of these vastly different individuals seems to be the unique stories involving the way we are treated as DJs.

For the sake of consistency, I've always used the dental field to elicit the comparison to the DJ industry, showing just how ridiculous the way people typically treat DJ is. People should ask themselves, "Would I ask my dentist this or treat my dentist this way?" before they engage a DJ in the scenario.

A general rule of thumb to abide by is: If you wouldn't say it to Dr. Aldi, don't say it to the DJ.

## Requesting Negativity

**Question:** Why are people so negative when they ask for a song? How often have you received a music request that has been preceded with "You probably don't have this one..."

I'd have to say that that's not a real positive outlook and is setting the tone for failure. Would you go to your dentist with pain in one of your back molars, and while pointing to the tooth say, "Oh, you're probably not going to be able to get to this one..."

Once during a remix recording session for a client, my engineer shared with me an all-too-





# A DJ's Point of View

IN AN EFFORT TO GET THE STYLE OF MUSIC **CHANGED**, THE PERSON CHOOSES THIS **PRIME** PIECE OF LINGUISTIC FERTILIZER: "WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS **MUSIC**. I'M FALLING ASLEEP."

familiar situation involving another seemingly clueless individual who I'm betting you've encountered dozens of times. He/she seems to pop up at every event I perform, like a pimple on prom night. In an effort to get the style of music changed, the person chooses this prime piece of linguistic fertilizer, "We've got to do something about this music. I'm falling asleep."

I always like to respond with the observation that I was unaware that suddenly this guest and I were a team, and that I thought I was working the event alone. Let's utilize our friendly neighborhood dentist again to make the comparison, "Doc, we've got to do something about that drill. You're killing me."

Another guest that seems to have crept into the lives of several of the DJs I've interviewed is the individual who claims to have been asked by multiple party guests to request a specific song from the DJ. This is a man or woman that has garnered the faith of a group of people who

coincidentally all want to hear the same song; yet none of them thought to ask you. No, universally, they all felt they had better odds of hearing "Smack My Bitch Up" by asking the annoying drunk at their table to ask you. Yeah, right.



## A Trick for Your Bag

In closing, I'd like to share with you a fantastic way of getting yourself off the hook when asked for a request you know you won't be playing. It's a sales technique that sounds very encouraging and positive when applied properly because of the positive words used in the response, none of which, however, are yes. It in no way commits you to playing the song, but seems to pacify people enough to get them to leave and allow you to do your job. Next time someone asks you to play "Christmas Hos" at your holiday party, respond with (positive words in italics), "I'm almost *positive* I have that. Let me look for it. If I *do*, I'll definitely play it for you."

Then don your headphones and adjust the volume on a channel of your mixer that you aren't currently using. Congratulations. You just became a magician by making a clueless person disappear. Now if we could just saw them in half. ■

*If you have a particular incident or story you'd like to share that involves how people treat you as a DJ—differently or strange or whatever—e-mail it to me at [raymardo@raymardo.com](mailto:raymardo@raymardo.com) with "Diary of a Mad DJ" in the subject.*

*Raymond A. Mardo III (Raymardo) has been in the entertainment field nearly his entire life. As a rookie, he earned awards at top East Coast DJ companies where he also provided training. Mardo then published "Making Money As A Mobile Entertainer" which was featured in magazines like Entrepreneur, which listed his LGR Entertainment company in their top 500 businesses in the nation. Under the name Natural Attraction, Raymardo released "Get Stupid" on Radikal/Popular Records in 15 countries. He now spends his time running online ventures, in film production, and writing.*



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## Rock Hall Remembers "Summer of Love"

In honor of the 40th anniversary of the "Summer of Love," in which the hippies frolicked, wore beads and fought to end "the war," the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum ([www.rockhall.com](http://www.rockhall.com)) has six relevant exhibits and displays. 1967 was a musical high water mark with many of the most legendary artists of all time doing their best work. Forty years later, the collection of exhibits and displays at the Rock Hall offer incredible perspective on music, politics and culture. People will be coming from all over the country to share their experiences of the Summer of Love with their kids and grandkids; other music fans will come to discover this important era themselves for the first time.

Rock Hall Summer of Love exhibits include: The Doors – "Break On Through; The Lasting Legacy of the Doors," produced with the full cooperation of the three surviving band members as well as the estate of Jim Morrison. 2007 is also the 40th anniversary of the Doors' first album and the band's founding.

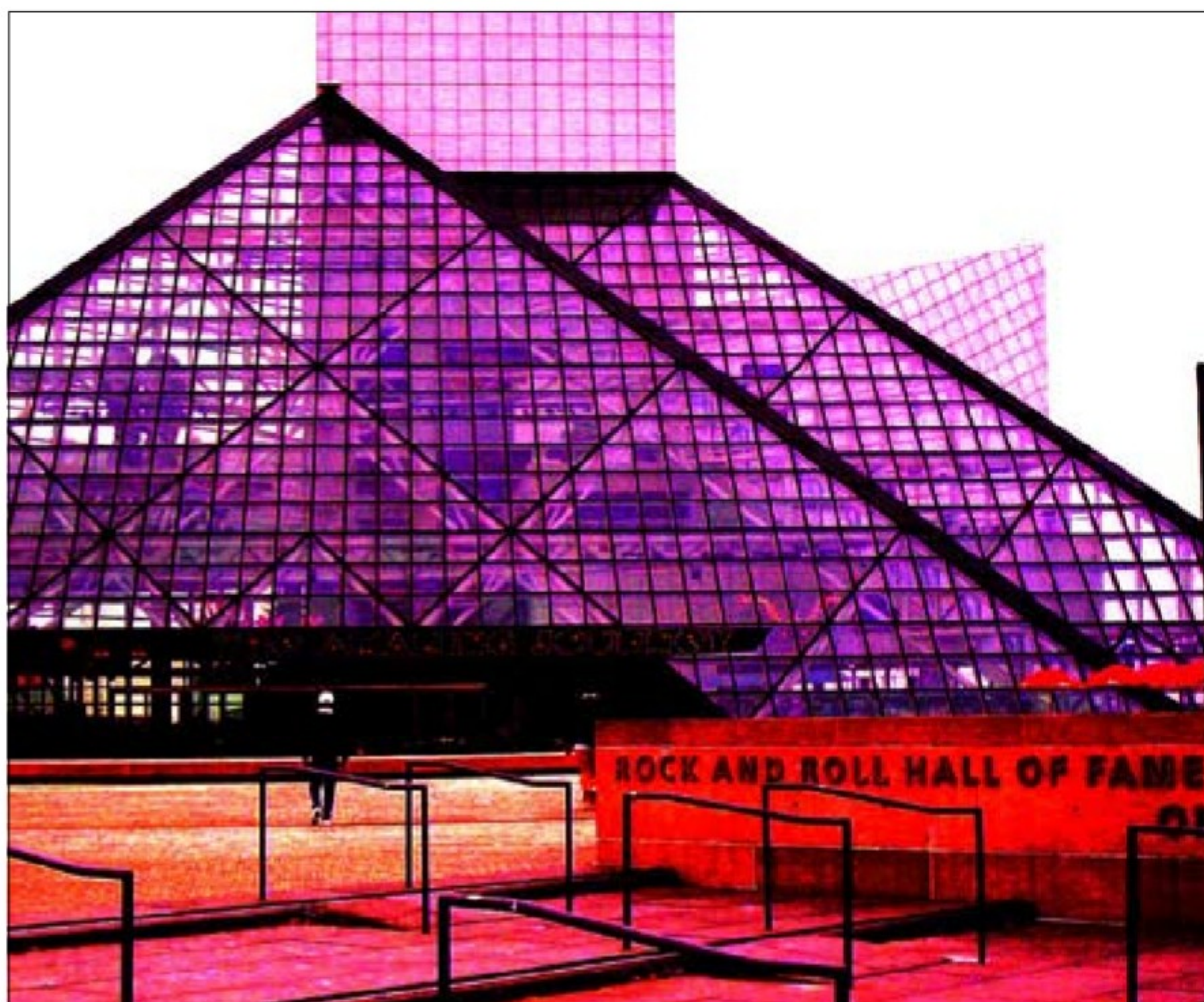
The Beach Boys – "Catch a Wave: The Beach Boys" explores the early years of the band that many consider to be "America's Beatles." Special emphasis is placed on the band's near-perfect 1966 album *Pet Sounds* as well as documenting the band's relationship to the emergence of Southern California's surf culture.

Monterey Pop – This legendary musical festival launched Janis Joplin's career and made Jimi Hendrix, the Mamas and the Papas, and dozens of other artists into the icons they became.

San Francisco City Scene – This smaller but incredible display documents the music scene in San Francisco from 1965 to 1969 and includes artifacts from the Seeds to the Charlatans to the Grateful Dead and Quicksilver Messenger Service, as well as Moby Grape, Janis Joplin, Santana, and more.

Otis Redding – The Rock Hall's Otis Redding collection spans from 1965 to his death in 1967 and includes many artifacts of perhaps the greatest male singer in popular music history. The intimate collection includes everything from his cuff links to the plane he died in; from his performance contracts to his never-recorded original lyrics.

Jimi Hendrix – No trip back to the Summer of Love could ignore this virtuoso. The Rock Hall's permanent Jimi Hendrix collection includes family snapshots, his original drawings, school and army yearbooks, original lyric manuscripts, guitars, and stage wear.



## Chauvet and Color Kinetics Enter Global Licensing Agreement

Florida-based CHAUVET ([www.chauvetlighting.com](http://www.chauvetlighting.com)) has entered into a licensing agreement with Massachusetts-based Color Kinetics Incorporated whereby CHAUVET has access to Color Kinetics' complete worldwide patent portfolio. The licensing agreement allows CHAUVET to consolidate its position in entertainment lighting by expanding its already substantial portfolio of LED-fitted products.

"Because we have invested heavily in LED technology and because we strongly believe that it is the way of the future, we took a pro-active stance in approaching Color Kinetics and seeking access to their patent portfolio," CHAUVET CEO Albert Chauvet said. "We are thrilled that we were able to come to an agreement that will help us consolidate our position as a forward-thinking, ground-breaking company while still allowing us to offer the value that we are known for."

"Color Kinetics is committed to enabling the intelligent LED Lighting market by granting access to the IP we've funded and developed for over ten years," said Bill Sims, president and CEO, Color Kinetics. "We're pleased to assist CHAUVET in its efforts and thereby support on-going development of LED-based entertainment lighting products."

## Cortex Awarded "Best Product Line" at 2007 NAME Conference

Cortex ([www.cortex-pro.com](http://www.cortex-pro.com)), a part of GCI Technologies, is proud to announce its groundbreaking HDC-1000 digital music controller as winner of the "Best Product Line" award presented at the National Association of Mobile Entertainers (NAME - [www.djkj.com](http://www.djkj.com))

National Conference held in Atlanta, GA this past April 16, 17 and 18.

The HDC-1000 utilizes Cortex's patent-pending USB-compatible technology to enable DJ's to access, cue up, play, scratch, pitch, manipulate, and search digital music files from a wide array of storage devices (up to 4 with an external USB hub) including the iPod, external USB hard-drives and flash drives, CD-ROM and DVD-ROM drives.

"All attendees at the NAME conference in Atlanta were excited to visit the Cortex booth. The HDC-1000 was the highlight of the entire conference," raved NAME director Bruce Keslar.

This year's NAME National Conference, dubbed "Building for the Future V," provided



GCI Technologies President Alan Cabasso accepts "Best Product Line" award from NAME Director Bruce Keslar.

attendees with an opportunity to "Make the Transition" first hand with a seminar led by Cortex guru Bernie Fryman, as well as get a sneak peek

CONTINUED ON PAGE 70



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## Spring Fling at idjnow

The DJ gear specialists at idjnow teamed up with Pioneer Pro DJ to present the "Pioneer DJ Spring Fling Road Show" at the store's newest location in Queens, NY last April 19th. Besides getting hands-on with all the latest technology from Pioneer, the more than 125 attendees enjoyed a assortment of giveaways, including a new DVJ1000 DVD Player, which went to a lucky winner from Pleasantville, NY. Up and coming R&B singer, E-Chris, winner of *Showtime at the Apollo* last year, delivered a live performance.





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66

at the fantastic new additions to the Cortex product line due later this year.

Upon accepting Cortex's "Best Product Line" award, GCI Technologies president Alan Cabasso glowed when saying, "NAME and it's membership have deeply embraced the GCI Technologies family of brands over the years and we are truly honored by this award and their support of our new technology."

## Royalties Hamper MB Radio; DJ Idea Sharing Pumps Podcast

Mobile Beat and ProDJ Publishing are sad to announce that Mobile Beat Radio is closing its doors for the time being. A potential 300% increase in Internet-based music licensing costs will hinder the service's ability to broadcast specialty music. (For the latest on the legislative battle over musoc licensing fees, go to [www.savenetradio.org](http://www.savenetradio.org).)

Although MB Radio focused on a talk-radio format, the integrating music-based programming around the live talk programs was essential to the plan to both educate and entertain.

As an alternative, however, DJ Idea Sharing ([www.djideasharing.com](http://www.djideasharing.com)) has established a strong format in the form of a downloadable podcast. ProDJ Publishing is swinging the full promotional avenues of Mobile Beat their direction. Since its inception, DJ Idea Sharing has been an extremely strong supporter of Mobile Beat and ProDJ.Com, and with this alliance will strengthen these ties even more.

"We started our podcast to make a positive contribution to the industry and we support Mobile Beat and stand by them with everything they do," said Mike Fernino, founder of DJ Idea Sharing. "It was my intention all along to have a program as part of Mobile Beat Radio; now it will turn out to be the other way around. With the combined efforts of Mobile Beat and DJ Idea Sharing, who knows how far this thing can go? Look for more of Mobile Beat on DJ Idea Sharing and vice versa!"

MB would like to thank everyone who supported the initial launch of Mobile Beat Radio. It is hoped that MB Radio can open its doors

again once the royalty fee controversy is settled.

## Three American DJ Moving Heads Receive ETL Approval

American DJ has announced that three moving head fixtures in its flagship Accu Series have been given ETL approval. The Accu Spot 300, Accu Spot 250 II, and Accu Wash 250 have been awarded the prestigious ETL seal, an internationally recognized standard of safety and professionalism.

ETL certification is based on very strict criterion, and is granted only after rigorous testing of a product and its manufacturing facility. The units had to pass stringent safety inspections to qualify for this top industry accreditation.

"We are quite pleased that our Accu Spot 300, Accu Spot 250 II, and Accu Wash 250 were judged to be in compliance with this benchmark of industry professionalism," said Scott Davies, general manager of the American DJ Group of Companies. "ETL approval signifies that a product is built to the highest quality standards and that it is completely safe to operate."

"The Accu Spot 300, Accu Spot 250 II, and Accu Wash 250 are part of our top-of-the-line Accu Series, and we have always believed them to be on par quality-wise with the very best products out there," added Davies. "Now that they are ETL-rated, our customers can be totally assured that this is the case." For more info, go to [www.americandj.com](http://www.americandj.com).

## Audio Pioneer Dr. Fritz Sennheiser Celebrates 95th Birthday

Dr. Fritz Sennheiser, a visionary who had a decisive influence on the development of sound transmission technology, turned 95 on May 9, 2007. It was in June 1945 that Dr. Sennheiser founded his "Laboratorium Wennebostel" with a staff of just seven employees—and a great deal of pioneering spirit—in an abandoned laboratory of Hanover's Technical University. Virtually overnight, the developer became a businessman, and a very successful one at that. Today, more than 1,650 people work for Sennheiser throughout the world, and the company now has production sites in Germany, Ireland and the USA.

The history of electroacoustics in Europe is

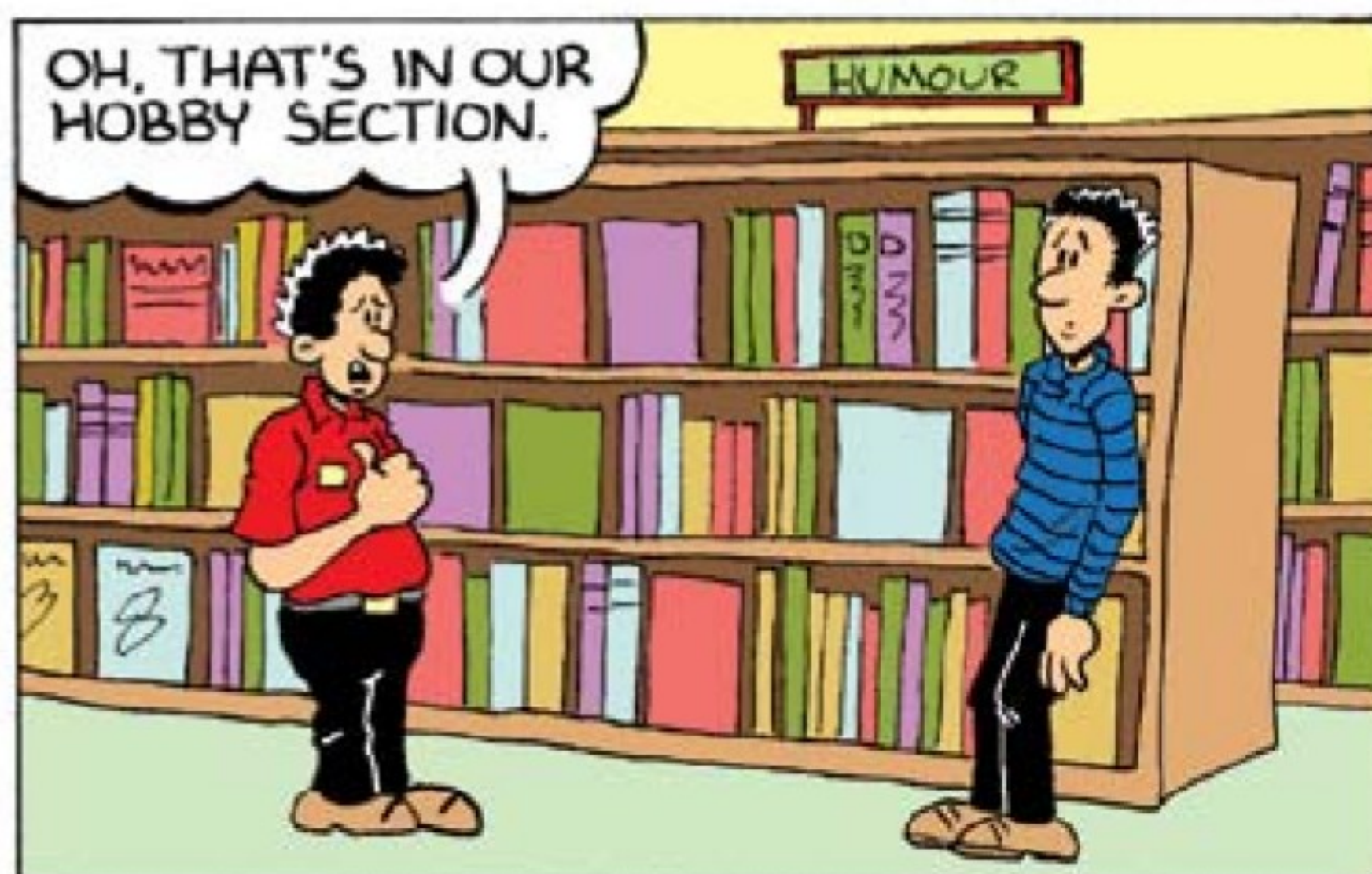


inseparably linked with the name Fritz Sennheiser. Born in Berlin, he grew up to experience, and to influence, many epoch-making developments in electroacoustics. Even as a young boy, he had a keen interest in all things technical. "I built my own radio receiver in 1924 from a slide coil and a crystal," the 95-year-old recalls. His passion for making new discoveries has accompanied Fritz Sennheiser throughout his life. He describes it as his "creative restlessness." "We were always dissatisfied with the 'state-of-the-art' and always wanted to create something new, something better. Our main priority was to have fun in developing something. And we certainly had a lot of fun when we discovered something really new. We had so many ideas. While others were busy copying our products, we already had our next inventions up our sleeve."

The family company's most important innovations included the shotgun microphone in the 1950s, open-back headphones in the 1960s, infrared transmission technology in the 1970s, and the revolutionary developments in multi-channel wireless technology in the early 1980s. In 1982, Fritz Sennheiser handed the management of the company over to his son, Prof. Dr. Jörg Sennheiser, who has continued to secure the company's success and is today chairman of the firm's supervisory board. ■

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# AMERICAN DISC JOCKEY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3



## LEADING BY EXAMPLE



By Mike Walter

### **When I was growing up my mom let my older brother and I adopt a cat.**

She was an alley cat and never quite took to being indoors, so we used to let her come and go as she pleased. Sometimes she'd be gone for days and we thought we'd never see her again, only to hear her meowing at the backdoor. A prodigal feline, if you will, who would come home to eat and sleep after tearing up the town. Soon she began to get fat, and in a process I didn't quite understand at the time, she gave birth to a kitten—just one. We were lucky! Mom told us we could keep her too.

### **Animal Example**

Mother Cat spent the next few weeks teaching her kitten everything she'd need to know to survive in the wilds of Queens, New York. She taught her how to lick herself clean and how to scratch her own back against a door jam. She taught by example, doing something herself and then waiting until the kitten did it right.

One day we watched as she placed her kitten on a windowsill overlooking our backyard, then went out back herself and stalked a bird. She pounced and the bird was dead in seconds. Then Mother Cat carried the bird to our backdoor and got her kitten to show her the kill. This was the ultimate "teaching by example" lesson I have ever witnessed. Soon after, Mother Cat took off and we never saw her again. We named the

kitten Gypsy (because she roamed our house endlessly) and she remained a house cat all her years. But I never doubted that if the steady diet of Purina ever dried up that she could stalk and kill a bird if she had to.

### **An Entertaining Education**

I think of that experience sometimes when I am working with my trainees. I am a huge proponent of classroom training...of rehearsal...of allowing my students to get on the microphone and fumble their way through introductions and announcements and showing line dances. They need this "hands-on" experience to improve and they need a good teacher to correct their flaws and enhance their strengths.

But I also recognize the need for trainees to witness great events—or bad events for that matter.

Classroom training will never, in and of itself, get your trainees to become great emcees. Classroom training combined with witnessing and being involved in actual parties is the one-two punch that has worked for me for years. They go hand in hand and if you are serious about training new talent, you need to be able to do both.

A month or two after starting any recruitment class, I start to pinpoint individuals who I believe have the most potential. Often times, these are the new assistants who are getting the rave reviews. The ones who are getting out on the dance floor and letting their natural personalities

CONTINUED ON PAGE 76



# New People in Key Positions

**As a result of the ADJA's recent change of organizational status, the process has begun to expand upon the leadership infrastructure so as to more appropriately fulfill the progressive direction of the organization. The following individuals represent the first of many appointments and have been named to volunteer positions in an effort to support this need.**



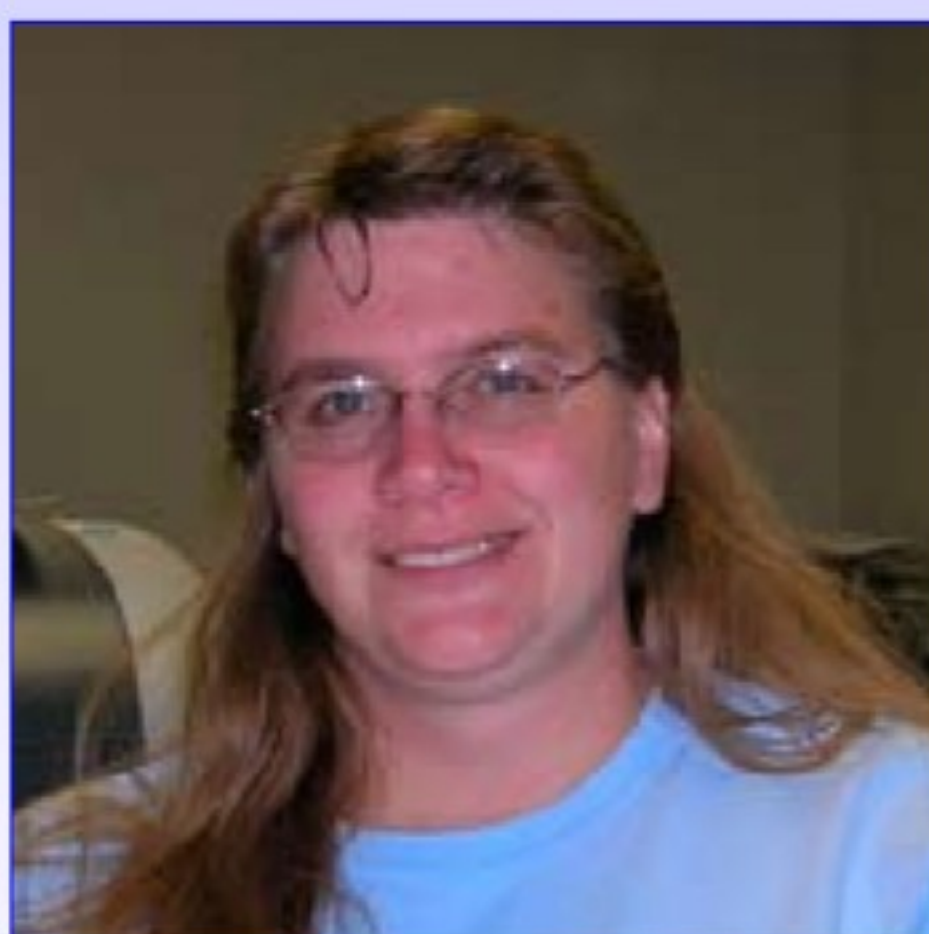
**Robbie Britton**  
**Membership Development**  
**Officer**

**Bio:** Robbie is a 17-year veteran of the mobile entertainment industry. He has been involved in full-time operations for 15 years. He is a frequent supporter of DJ conferences and networking groups and has worked diligently in bringing people together through networking.

**Job Description:** Responsible for forming membership development committees and programs for member growth with ADJA Director Bryan Foley to stimulate new membership growth.

**Statement from Robbie Britton:**

"Someone once said... 'Sooner or later, all good ideas degenerate into hard work.' The ADJA is a good idea. Now it is time for the hard work. The foundation has been laid, the benefits are in place and the leadership is rock solid. Now it's time to "build and grow" the ADJA. It's time to take advantage of all the hard work that has already been done. It's time to put this 'great idea' to work. I would like to see the ADJA's membership base double by MBLV08."



**Valerie Ruste Upper Midwest**  
**Regional Representative**

**Bio:** Valerie is co-owner of Square One Productions of South Dakota, a single-system company specializing in school and corporate events. Prior to starting her own company in 2005, Valerie spent 13 years working full time for a multi-op company where she managed virtually all aspects of the business from marketing and employee management to client contact.

**Job Description:** An ADJA Regional Representative is responsible for membership and chapter growth in their region, providing support for local chapters in the region. She is the key person to help the board to more closely feel the pulse of the membership in the region.

**Statement from Valerie Ruste:**

"I look forward to working with the ADJA to help bring the opportunity for networking and support to new and different parts of the country. I hope that my experience working in many of the markets in the upper midwest region will lend me the insight to help DJs from all demographics and specialties feel integrated in the organization, and benefit from its support and education. "I hope that my passion and experience in the school market will help bring together more school DJs to a higher level of respect and performance through the ADJA's tools."



**Larry Williams**  
**Public Relations Consultant**

**Bio:** Larry Williams has been involved with the mobile DJ profession, full time, for more than 18 years. He has been a freelance journalist for more than 20 years. He also is a published author and nationally recognized seminar speaker for the DJ community. In 2006, he was awarded the ADJA's Michael Butler Humanitarian Award.

**Job Description:** The position of Public Relations Consultant has been established to fulfill the Public Relations Director role as recently vacated by Jim Cerone once his term had expired. In a mostly behind-the-scenes manner, he will be responsible for the writing and editing of press releases, newsletter articles and other official statements as needed, under the guidance of the Board of Directors.

**Statement from Larry Williams:**

"I am excited at the opportunity to add a needed journalistic element to official press releases for the ADJA. A company or organization is often perceived favorably and seen in a more professional light when they release well-prepared, pertinent information in a manner that is articulate and representative of the professionalism they wish to portray. I am looking forward to putting my years of journalistic experience to work in an effort to progress our organization to the next level."



# The Master's Series: NOW is the Time for I.E.

By Scott Faver, The Game Master

## This time it's all about I.E. — Instant Entertainment, Immediate Excitement, Instant Energy...

As an entertainer, beyond music, what can you do that will WOW your audience and express to them, in a heart beat, that they are going to have an awesome entertainment experience? That's what I call I.E. and here are a few examples...

### Corporate Spirit Team:

Guests are outside the room for the cocktail hour, and the doors to the room are closed. When the doors open and the guests enter the room they are greeted by the Spirit Team. This is a group of 10 or more company employees who are excited, loud, highly motivated, cheerleader types, creating two lines that the guests will pass through as they enter the room. As they enter the room, the Spirit Team offers guests high fives, pats on the back, cheers, and props appropriate to the theme of the event: Hawaiian leis, maracas, glow sticks, top hats, sombreros, etc. For a recent cruise ship themed event, each person's or couple's picture was taken as they entered. We then flashed the pictures on the big screen during the dinner time.



### Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the Sally Shuffle:

For Mitzvahs, I.E. starts with the DJ playing games with the kids in a separate area while the adults are having cocktails. During this game time the DJ will teach the kids how to do the "Sally Shuffle." Sally is the Bat Mitzvah girl, she has pre-selected a (danceable) song that you have used to created a personalized dance routine you call the Sally Shuffle.

Teach the kids the dance. Then when the doors open, all the kids are on the dance floor doing the Sally Shuffle, with Sally and her best friends in front leading the way. Then the kids can invite the adults to join them.

Or, a baseball theme: The doors open and Johnny is the pitcher, 10-20 of his friends comprise two baseball teams who mimic, pretend to play a game of baseball. The DJ is the sports announcer of this World Series Game, with Johnny on the mound, about to strike out the last player to win the series. There's a bat, mitts, and players—but NO ball. It's all pretend. The kids don't know what the DJ -announcer is going to say, so they have to respond live, according to his announcements. Very spontaneous! Very fun. Very I.E.

### At a Wedding:

Plastic, blow up style furniture. A couch, or a few chairs. Doors open and the guests are treated to a live version of The Love Connection, The Dating Game, The Newlywed Game or The Not So Newlywed Game. As guests arrive they are invited to have a seat and get started on a questionnaire:

1. Where should the bride and groom go on their honeymoon?
2. How long should the honeymoon last?
3. How many children should they have?
4. What should their children's names be?
5. What should the groom give



Hey DJ! Welcome to back to the Master's Series: The Game Master's take on games, performance, marketing, and DJ business concepts, designed to take your business to the next level, and beyond. Each article will tap your potential, stretch your limits, and inspire you to—to give your clients what they want, make them raving fans, have them refer you to all their friends, and keep coming back for more! Just what we all want.

the bride for her first married Birthday?

6. What should the bride give the groom for his first married Birthday?

Or a different twist: "How well do you know the Bride and Groom?" Ask a series of questions about their personal life, pets, birthdates, schooling, family, how they met, etc.

Yet another twist: Ask each table to select the #1 reason the bride and groom are going to stay married forever. Then create your own Top 10 list based on the answers. Invite the guests to announce their answer once the bride and groom have arrived.

Just before the bride and groom come in, and after your personal style of introduction of the family and wedding party, plan a surprise for the couple. With the doors closed and the couple outside the room, waiting to be introduced, ask all the guests to stand and gather around the door area where the bride and groom are going to enter. Make a path down the middle. Then, when the bride and groom enter everyone is standing there, cheering, offering high fives and congratulations. A real unexpected surprise for the happy couple.

As always, for the success of your event, know your client, know your audience and build rapport before embarking upon any I.E. or entertainment activity for your event. For more free ideas, games and marketing tips visit: <http://thepartyfavors.com/maillistform.html> ●



# What I Really Want to Do ... Is Direct!



By Peter Merry

**For years, countless Wedding DJs have been promoting themselves as more than just music by claiming to also serve as the Master of Ceremonies.**

Some have used the abbreviation, MC, while others have used the slang spelling, emcee. But no matter how they spelled it, most of them were more than willing to adopt this title regardless of whether or not they fully understood the total responsibilities entailed when serving as a Master of Ceremonies. The general assumption has been that the MC is simply the person who makes the announcements at a reception. But there is a title already available that fulfills that limited role.

**Announcer\* [uh-noun-ser] –noun  
A person who announces...**

The term, Master of Ceremonies, carries more duties than just making announcements. Anyone can make announcements. If someone is asked to announce that it's time for the bride and groom to cut the cake, they can make that announcement just as simply and dispassionately as they might announce that a car has been left with its headlights on in the parking lot. An announcer can easily introduce the bride and groom as the "bride and groom" throughout the celebration. If someone were to offer more personalized announcements, perhaps their services could be better described by a different title.

**Spokesperson\* [spohks-pur-suh n] –noun  
A person who speaks for another or for a group.**

But the term Master of Ceremonies also carries much more obligation than just making personalized announcements as a polished spokesperson. For far too long this term has been used by many who have never even bothered to explore the true burden they began to carry when they chose to call themselves an MC.

**Master of Ceremonies\* [mas-ter of ser-uh-moh-nees] –noun  
A person who directs the entertainment at a party...acting as host and introducing the speakers or performers.**

What does it mean to direct the entertainment? How many of us are truly acting as the host? Do you think of your weddings as gigs or as uniquely entertaining reception celebrations? Some may think they are already directing the entertainment at their receptions, but the details of how they believe themselves to be fulfilling these duties may vary greatly from one entertainer to another.

Acting as host involves taking personal ownership for the success of the event while also doing whatever can be done to make each guest feel personally welcomed and appreciated. This can be fulfilled by doing something as simple as holding the door open and greeting the guests with a smile as they begin to arrive. But it can also be taken to the level of making the guests feel more personally involved in the reception celebration by creating opportunities for them to connect with you, with each other, and with the bride and groom.

Directing the entertainment requires much more than just informing the guests via microphone about the next activity on the agenda. It also entails giving the "cast and crew" their blocking and their cues, setting the "stage" with the right lighting and volume levels, and ensuring that the "props" are in place for each scene. It is the duty of the MC to make sure the bride's father is ready and aware that the Father/Daughter Dance is about to occur...before making the announcement. Checking in with the photographer and videographer before announcing the formal toasts and discussing where they will be staged is how the MC will ensure that his or her fellow professionals won't miss out on an important Kodak moment. Arranging for the lights to be dimmed as the First Dance begins or keeping the dinner music levels set so the guests can still carry on comfortable conversations are important parts of being the MC. Double-checking to make sure the cake knife, server,

plate, and napkin are in their proper places at the cake table is something every MC should do before inviting the guests to gather for the cake cutting. Of course, no "director" would ever attempt

to create an entertaining play, movie, or reception without first developing a quality script. Do you script out the moments that will occur at your receptions into a smooth-flowing agenda? Are your scripted agendas based on a cookie cutter template or do you build in a variety of opportunities for your clients to personalize each of their special moments? When your scripted agenda is complete, are you providing the rest of the "crew" (coordinator, caterer, photographer, videographer, etc.) with their own advance copies?

As you can clearly see, being the Master or Ceremonies is quite a bit of work and might even entail more responsibility than some DJs may want to actually carry. However, I have heard from some DJs who say "I don't want to be the director...I just want to be the DJ."

**Disc jockey\* [disk jok-ee] –noun  
1. A person who conducts a radio broadcast consisting of recorded music, informal talk, commercial announcements, etc.  
2. A person who selects, plays, and announces records at a discotheque.**

In light of the services described above, it's no wonder so many DJs want to add more perceived value to their services by saying they will serve as the MC in addition to being the DJ. But truth be told, just as many actors are known to say when they are looking to develop their career to the next level, a DJ who promotes themselves as also providing MC services is actually telling their clients..."What I really want to do is direct!" ●

*\*All definitions were taken from Dictionary.com*





# Why Good Is BEST and Best Is BAD

By Harry Beckwith

## Every husband and wife knows this: human beings are not rational.

Knowing this is critical to being a good marketer, but only if you understand a related point: Humans are irrational—but in ways you can predict. Consider, as evidence, the good / better / best / paradox:

Three miles south of downtown Minneapolis, turn right on Lake Street, drive almost nine-tenths of mile, and look right to see a famous site: the restaurant that once served the best breakfast in the world. Until January of this year, the Calhoun Grill promised you just such a meal, on a banner in front of the restaurant the width and height of semi-truck. Driving up to the Grill, you expected to see lines of people standing in the cold outside.

But there never were lines outside—or inside—until lunchtime. Starting around noon, however, you had to give your name to the greeter...and wait. Why didn't people want the World's Best Breakfast, but craved a lunch the restaurant owners did not even advertise?

Decades ago, advertising legend David Ogilvy observed that marketers spend too much time trying to prove they are the superior choice. "You can accomplish far more," Ogilvy observed, "simply by convincing people that you are positively good."

Ogilvy never explained his comment or offered proof, and many people reading it paused, furrowed their brows and moved on. But Ogilvy was right. People want "positively good." Telling them you're better than your competitors actually repels them—partly because your claim is immodest, but also because it reminds them they have a choice.

What do we do when we have several choices? We become paralyzed. Choices make us worry about making a bad choice. As every good clothing salesperson knows, show a man a nice pair of black shoes and he will buy

them. Show him four nice pairs, however, and there's a good chance he will leave empty-handed. Researchers at Stanford discovered this too. If they offered grocery store buyers the choice of one or two strawberry jams, the buyers picked one. Given multiple choices, however, they chose none. Doctors behave identically. They will recommend one proven medication 72% of the time. If they have multiple options for that medication, however, they actually prescribe nothing -- nothing -- 52% of the time. Presented with several good choices, we make no choices. This explains why "best breakfasts" and other claims of superiority backfire. "Best" means "best among many," and causes you to fear making the wrong choice among those many. The more options you face, in fact, the more fearful you become—which is why many of you haven't replaced your obsolete, frustrating, and probably crappy DVD player.

The inexperienced sales or marketing person asks you to compare; the effective ones remove any basis for comparison. They don't sell you that theirs is better; they show you theirs is different. The new salesman touts "We're the better law firm." The experienced one emphasizes, "We're not a law firm. We're a specialty Intellectual Property practice." "We're not investment managers," the experienced head of business development insists. "We're a family office."



"We're not a cola," Seven-Up insisted. "We're The Uncola."

"We're not a computer," Apple stressed.

"We're the uncomputers—the machines for people who hate computers."

"We're not a coffee shop", Starbucks insists.

"We're 'the third place,' the place you gather when you're not at work or at home."

Tell me that you're better and you ask me to compare you to others. Tell me you're different, and you stand alone.

Decades ago, buyers at Macy's department store in New York ventured into the storeroom and discovered enough terry cloth to dry off Manhattan. They immediately began considering how they might liquidate this excess: two for one, free gift with purchase, Special This Week Only!

But the problem with all those strategies is that each involved selling towels -- and towels in department stores are more plentiful than shells on beaches. With so many towels to choose from, a towel buyer is more likely than not to choose the wrong one.

Fortunately, a Macy's employee named Bernice Fitzgibbon knew that she couldn't sell "better towels." But she could sell "untowels"; a form of terry cloth so different that the term towel simply was not apt. These were not towels, she told New Yorkers in these memorable ads. They were "blotters," the oversized towels popular in Europe that served a different purpose.

Why buy just another towel from among many when you could have a blotter? Why indeed? Macy's blotters flew out of the downtown store as if they had heard someone shout "Fire!" So as a great breakfast suggests and a blotter proves, better isn't good, and best isn't better, as irrational as that seems. Only different is better—and it's much, much better. ●



*Presented with several good choices, we make no choices.*



## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

shine (assuming those personalities are good ones, of course). The mixers who are showing up on time and handling the technical side of things flawlessly, as well.

These new people are the ones I start assigning to my veteran emcees. I match them up with the emcees who I want them to learn from. And I let them know this too. I meet with them and I tell them, "If you

*I want them to see it perfectly—to know by first-hand experience exactly how it should be done.*

are interested in emcee training you will be invited in soon. Meantime, you will notice that, for the most part, you'll be working with our experienced emcees. Utilize these gigs as an opportunity to learn. Be a sponge and soak up as much as you can."

This process goes on into emcee training as well. When I am working with a class on a particular song or dance, I will often make sure that whoever they are working with that weekend will be doing that routine. I'll call my emcees and say, "Are you doing the Cha Cha Slide this Saturday? You are? Good! You are working with..." Of course the first one I check with is myself, since I tend to do things very strictly by the book (the obvious reason being, I wrote the book).

And when I have an event like that—when I have a trainee working with me as my mixer and I get to the song or routine that I want him or her to really experience first hand—I have to say that I feel very much like our cat back in the day; like I'm propping my emcee up at the windowsill and then heading out in full view to stalk a bird. I want them to see it perfectly—to know by first-hand experience exactly how it should be done. And then when the routine is over, I'll come back to the table with the same triumphant feeling that our cat did, showing the emcee the results and looking him or her straight in the eye as if to say, "You can do that too!"

If you are a great emcee and your goal is to train great emcees, never forget the benefits of first hand experience. ●

## Tips for "selling down" for multi-ops

By Mike Walter

**I have gotten to know many multi-op owners from around the country. I love to network with them and share war stories and concerns. One of the things I've come to realize is that if you ask almost every multi-op how they got started you'll hear a similar tale:**

Once upon a time there was a single-op. He generated lots of referrals—so many referrals that he got sick and tired of turning away work when he was already booked on a certain day. Finally he thought, "If I could find one more DJ, then I could double the amount of work I'm doing." Then he found another and another and they all lived happily ever after...

If that's your story (without the "happily ever after" part of course) then I also wouldn't be surprised if one of your biggest concerns is the ability to sell your other DJs. Or as I call it, "selling down." In other words, how do you get a client that really wants YOU, the owner, to really want THEM—your DJs? Plus, how do you get the banquet halls that refer you by name to start referring your company as a whole?

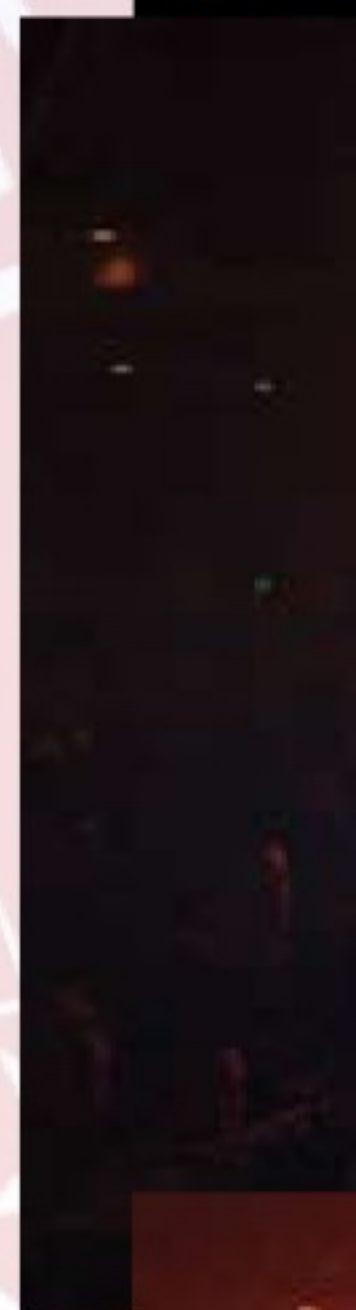
These are just a few of the things that I have found to be successful:

**If you use video to sell, make individual video demos of everyone on your staff, rather than having just one generic video to represent the entire company.**

If you've never done this, get some raw footage of an event that one of your DJs has done. You should be able to get that footage from one of the videographers that you work with (if you recommend that videographer, they should be happy to give you that footage.) Take the raw footage, pull out all the highlights of your DJ, edit them together and voila! You should have a quick moving, 10 to 12-minute demo. If you dress it up with an opening montage and some cool effects, you can even create a finished product that can sell without you being there (i.e., you can mail it out to prospective clients or put it up on your website instead of having to meet every client face-to-face).

Another suggestion to help you sell down is to **stop putting the company's focus solely on you.**

This can be difficult at first, since as the owner you have probably always thought of yourself as the face of the company. But if you do this effectively, you can start creating multiple "faces" for your image. One way I do this: when we take our annual group picture, I never sit front and center. I always just place myself somewhere in





# HOW TO SELL YOUR STAFF



the mix. (In fact, we always get a chuckle about who it is each year that “owns the company” when we eventually see the proofs—that is, whoever randomly winds up front and center.)

**Here’s a great way to see whether your company’s focus is too much on you and needs to be spread out more to your staff.**

If you’re reading this article in your office, put it down and look around. Do you have action shots on the walls? (If not, I’d ask you why you don’t, but that’s a topic for another article.) How many of those action shots have you in them? If your answer is “All” or even “The vast majority,” I urge you to get more pictures of your staff. Do the same test with your website. Do you have action shots online? Well, how many of those feature you?

I want to mention a caveat here before I move on. Unless you want to give up emceeing entirely, don’t completely obliterate your image from your company’s marketing. If you do, the perception in your area may become that you are only a “company owner” now and not an entertainer. So, while I do suggest broadening the focus of your company’s marketing, I also suggest that it still include you. After all, you are probably the most recognizable name and face that your company has, so do not completely erase yourself from the picture.

**Another suggestion involves showcasing.** Live showcases are the perfect vehicle to sell down. They give you the opportunity to fill a room with perspective clients and then have every one of your emcees get on the

microphone, get on the dance floor and get into their heads and hearts. At most of my company’s showcases, at least four or five of my emcees get more bookings than I do. And I’m fine with that. I can fill my own schedule with referrals, plus I’ve begun to cut back on my own bookings in the last few years anyway so, I’m not as desperate for that Friday wedding in April as I used to be. If it goes to one of my DJs, that’s fine with me, because at least it stayed in the company.

**As far as the banquet halls that refer you, the best way to make them aware of your other DJs is a little “premeditation.”**

Keep an eye on your schedule and when you see that one of your other DJs is playing in one of your house accounts, touch base with the powers-that-be there the week before the event and let them know. A simple phone call saying, “Hey, one of the guys I’ve been telling you about is in your room this week; be sure to check them out,” is a good start. But an even better way to accomplish this is to bring that entertainer with you to the hall the week before hand and introduce him or her to the staff. This can actually be a meeting that kills two birds with one stone, as the DJ gets to see the layout of the room and the load-in requirements and the staff gets to meet him. The next thing you know,

**How do you get a client that really wants YOU, the owner, to really want THEM—your DJs?**

the referrals that come from that hall don’t say “We have to get the owner,” they say “We hear you’re all great.” And that’s the ultimate goal.

If you are a multi-op and would like the ability to book your staff more than yourself, making a conscience effort to sell down is the key. The first step towards accomplishing that is taking a step back as the owner and allowing your staff to share the spotlight.

Best of luck! ●







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# Keys for a Better Life

By Bryan Dodge

Building a better life begins with your ability to overcome the barriers to building a better YOU. We must overcome the obstacles that get in the way of personal happiness and success. To do this, study these very important keys.

### 1st Key: Develop a grateful heart

Throughout each day, focus on the aspects of your life for which you are grateful. In my opinion, that is the true difference between good and average. Good appreciates what it has before it's lost; average only appreciates what it has after it's gone. It's your choice. Recently, a participant at one of my seminars came up to me before the program and said "I'm not very happy. What do you recommend?" My answer was, "Don't stay there very long." Life is too short not to be happy, and life is too long not to do well.

### 2nd Key: Eliminate your sense of entitlement

That false sense of entitlement in any area of your life is an enemy that will keep you bound to unhappiness and will keep you from building the better life that you are meant to live. The only way to break loose of this negative habit of mind is to relinquish the unrealistic

expectations you may have of others, such as the government, your employer, your friends and relatives, your spouse, and your kids. As you focus on the realistic aspects of your life, you will gain an increased ability to love and respect others unconditionally.

### 3rd Key: Destroy the weeds of envy

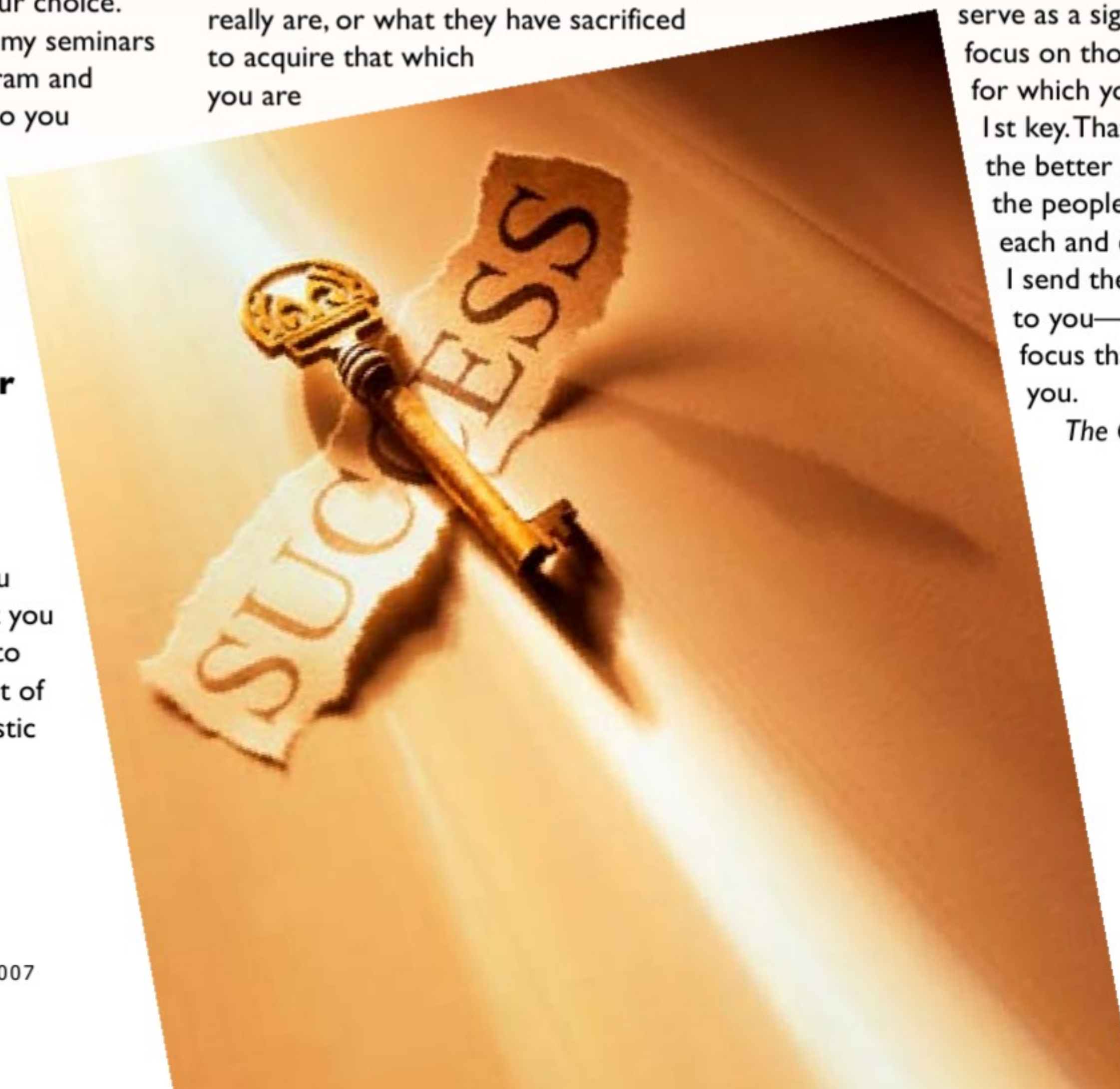
When you find yourself envying what others have, remember three important facts: You don't know the whole story of the challenges in other people's lives. Last time I checked, everything a person owns is left behind at death—and you never know when your last day will be. You don't know their whole story. You don't know how happy or unhappy they really are, or what they have sacrificed to acquire that which you are

envying. The questions you have to ask are: "Did they sacrifice their personal lives?" "Did they make unethical or immoral choices?" "Did they sacrifice time with their family?"

Regardless of what they have, remember, when they die, they will leave it all behind.

Whenever you feel envy, let those feelings serve as a signal to reset your focus on those facets of your life for which you are grateful—the 1st key. That focus will attract the better life for you and all the people depending on you each and every day. That is why I send these regular messages to you—to help you keep the focus that will build a better you.

*The Good Life Rules! •*





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# Stuck, Scratched and Scarred

**A**fter reading Tony Barthel's instant classic "Smoke, Smoke, Everywhere" piece (May '07), I just had to share my most recent "Extraordinary Event." It doesn't rival his unfortunate experience, but it did have fumes coming out of my nose and ears!

It was at an outside wedding, up in our local mountains. A gorgeous day, a little on the warm side but perfect for an area that can and often does get very chilly. (There was a blizzard there last time I attempted to DJ at the same location. I couldn't make it up the hill to the venue because the road was snowed in!)

I had just sat down next to my wedding ceremony system, a Numark CDMIX-2, which had been bulletproof and incredibly dependable, until just that moment!

I swear, just as the groomsmen were getting ready to walk, the system took a dump. I mean it just flat out quit—with the wedding CD inside. Not one to panic, even with guests looking on, while sitting in the hot sun, I took out my rather dull pocket knife and started to root out the CD as best as I could. I have to hand it to Numark—it was a b-word to tear into it. Finally the CD fell out...but it was severely scratched.

Next I ran up about a million-step staircase to my main system which was already set up and standing by for the reception. I found a helpful waiter and we lugged that system back down the stairs. Hooking everything up, I was back in business.

The groomsmen's song was so badly scratched it wouldn't play, so I quickly picked out a different song (fortunately, they were country music fans; it was easy to quickly find another one) and signaled them to start walking. Whew! One of the photogs whispered to me, "Good save." I seem to remember someone in radio once telling me, "Making a mistake is one thing, but it's the PRO who doesn't panic and recovers like nothing ever happened."

Later on I didn't feel so mechanically maligned, when one of the venue's staff asked me to hold off on the toasts because their refrigerator wasn't working properly and they were still trying to chill the champagne.

On another funny side note, I asked the videographer if he had ever sent any thing to *America's Funniest Videos*. He said yes and that he got paid \$1,000 for it. He split the money with the newlyweds but added it must have been a short marriage because they asked for separate checks. During my event's bouquet toss, we also had an AFV moment. The bride threw her flowers so hard that one of the gals had to jump over a white picket fence to catch it. She got a nice cut down her leg to prove her determination to get married.

Bottom line: stuff happens and the audience usually pulls for you. Just don't panic; go ahead and try to figure out how to fix it. Like I always say, "It's never a problem, just a challenge to overcome." Oh and by the way, least you think badly about Numark, I've already ordered another CDMIX-2 because it's still my favorite portable system.

P.S. To Tony: Please feel free to add this to your next edition of *Wedding Horror Stories*...I can't wait to read it.  
—Mike Ryan (Mike on the Mike)





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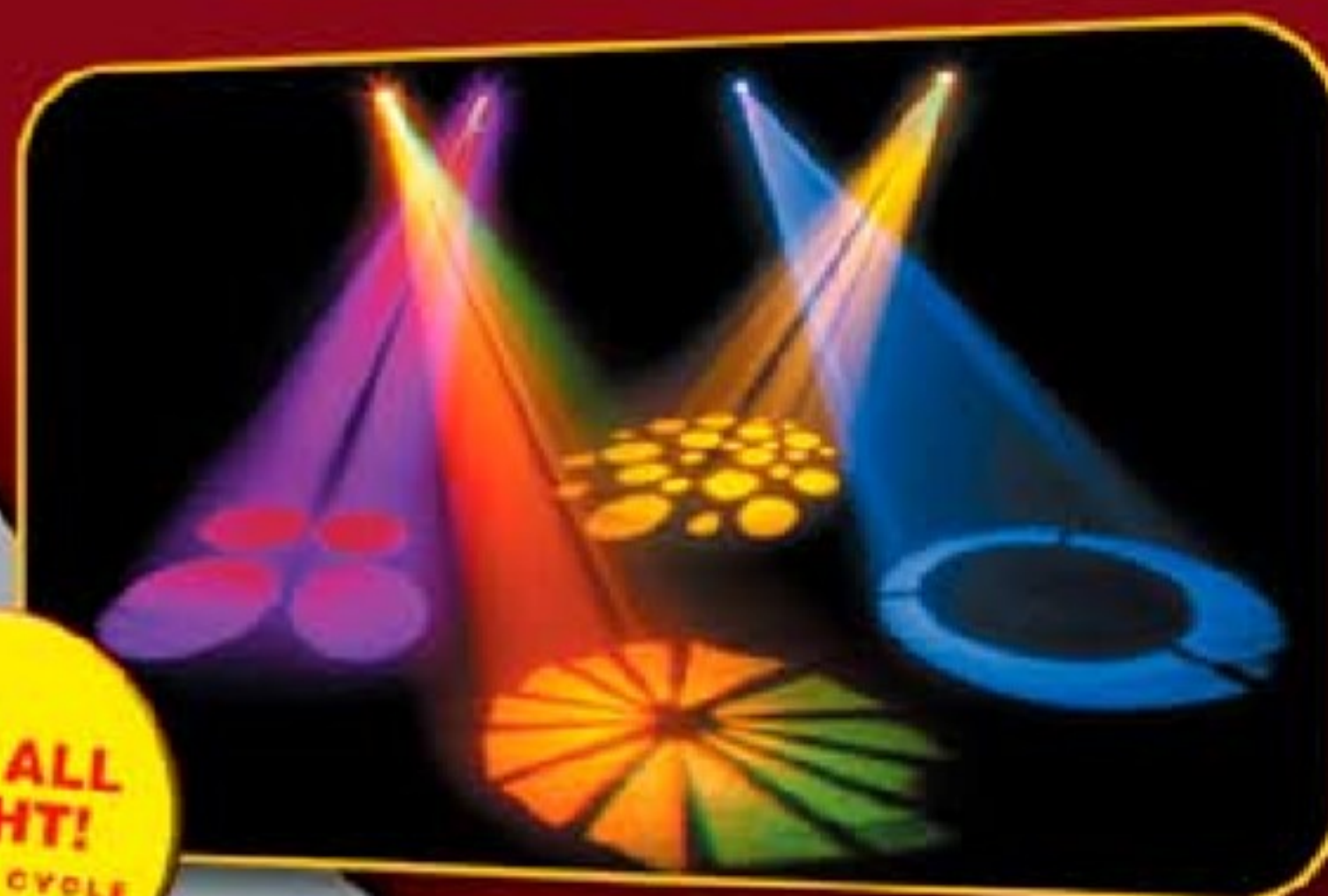
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